THE DRAMA;

OR,

THEATRICAL

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MR. MUNDEN.

"In *Reason*, *Nature*, *Truth*, he puts his trust;
Ye Fops, be silent!—and, ye Wits, be just!"
Prologue to "*Irene*."

It has been observed, that extravagance and grimace are generally accounted acquisitions very easy in themselves, as requiring no knowledge, scarce any understanding, and rather the absence of good qualities, than the possession of any others. Yet there are innumerable exceptions to this rule; and many characters might be selected where an occasional flexibility of muscle becomes essential, and where ludicrous gestures and contortions of countenance may be tolerated, inasmuch as they amuse the fancy, and move an audience to laughter. Mr. MUNDEN is one of these exceptions—he is the finest comic actor our stage can boast, and has only this one fault on which he can be

arraigned at the bar of criticism—but it is now and then so glaring as to overcloud entirely what would otherwise be considered as the brightest gems of true comic acting. The continual laughter which usually follows the innumerable variety of fanciful contortions into which he can turn and twist his features, have rendered him somewhat regardless of the more refined traits of character, and he therefore oftentimes trusts to his oddity of gesture, and the inimitable flexibility of his face, for securing the favour of his audience, and saving himself the trouble of close study; it in consequence produces the effect he desires, and though sound sense and reason must disclaim it, yet it scarcely ever fails of disarming the anger of the most fastidious censor. His features are like the reflection of a man's face in a ruffled stream, they undergo a "perpetual undulation of grin;" his emotions are attended by grimaces, which he by no means wishes to be considered as unstudied, for if they have not immediately their effect upon the spectator, he *improves*, or continues them till they have, and we have often seen his interlocutor disconcerted, and the performance stopped by the unseasonable laughter of the audience, which they often find it impossible to restrain even in defiance of their better reason. It may therefore be rightly concluded that in the broad and *outré* farces and comedies of the present day, Mr. M. riots and revels in the very plenitude of unopposed power; and indeed there is no one with whom we are acquainted, that could gain so much favour for a modern piece of the above description by the mere abuse of his features. If such an abuse of "the human face divine" ever becomes *natural*, it is in the deformity of drunkenness, and here Mr. M. beats all competitors from the field by the excellence of his representation of the variable fatuity of intoxication. His best and most entertaining performances are in our opinion of this kind, as for instance, that of *Crack*, in the "*Turnpike Gate*," and the *Captain's Servant* in the musical puppet show called the "*English Fleet*." His attitude and looks in the latter piece, when he receives a ring from the lady as a reward for his courageous service—his tottering earnestness in contemplating the honour on his finger, and the

conscious glance which he turns now and then at his Captain behind him, exhibit a master-piece of drunken vanity. These are the touches which heighten the miserable daubs of our modern dramatists, which throw life into their inanimate figures and character into their half-formed countenances. Mr. M. in his imitation of an intoxicated man, always shews his judgment by standing as much as possible in one place. Our actors in general seem to forget, that a person under the influence of liquor, unless he is almost insensible, always attempts a command of himself, and restrains his motions as much as the weakness of his limbs will permit; they are much too fond of jerking up one leg at every step, and of reeling round the stage. His *Darby*, in the "*Poor Soldier*," is well known to be one of the richest pieces of drollery on the boards, and we confess we *here* doat upon his contortions, extravagancies, and buffooneries; for the part is in itself a caricature, and can scarcely be overcharged: that of *Kit Sly*, in the "*Cobler of Preston*," is of the same description. *Kit* is the very life and soul of the piece, and scarcely any thing appertains to the other characters, but to be instrumental in exhibiting his drolleries to advantage: it therefore affords a rich field for the display of his powers, and he loses no opportunity of exerting them.

Mr. MUNDEN's acting receives remarkable assistance from his vocal powers, which in the execution of comic songs are of a very masterly description; in the first named character, and that of *Jemmy Jumps*, this is displayed to peculiar advantage. In the representation of garrulous old age and decrepitude, he stands without a rival—witness his *Sir Francis Wronghead, Old Dornton, Adam Winterton, (Iron Chest) Old Rapid, Verdun, (Lovers Vows); Justice Woodcock, (Love in a Village); Sir Francis Gripe, (Busy Body); Don Manuel, (She Would and she Would Not)* and innumerable other characters: his assumption of feebleness is not confined to a shake of the head and a tremulous voice, but displays itself by an apparent general debility pervading every look and every action. In the first character he is eminently successful in his delineation of the affectionate father, who though threatened with ruin, cannot withdraw his affections from that son to whose thoughtless extrava-

gance all his difficulties are attributable. In the first casting of the comedy at Covent Garden Theatre, by Mr. HOLCROFT, the author, the part of *Old Dornton* was designed for QUICK, and that of *Silky*, for MUNDEN—but QUICK deeming the parental, sententious father, as rather out of his line of performing, the characters were transposed, as to assumption, when Mr. M. burst upon the public with such a novel radiance as laid the corner-stone of his future professional greatness. It was a new line of acting in which he elicited sparks of glory from himself—he copied nature alone, and the part is in consequence an histrionic model.(1) As the old butler *Verdun*, he gives us some most whimsical yet delightful specimens of comic humour. His mode of reading the verses he had written upon the robbery of the *Baron*, is inimitably comic; and his surprise that *Amelia* should slight them, though expressed in silence, is one of the clearest demonstrations of astonishment and contempt we have ever seen.

The amorous old *Justice Woodcock* in his hands, is the best now on the stage. It is far more amusing than DOWTON'S, and is not rendered disgusting by the libidinous grossness which the latter performer too often throws into it. We would recommend inferior actors to study the manner in which he gives the song "*When I followed a lass.*" Without at all weakening its comic humour, he skilfully softens down its objectionable features, instead of driving every decent woman out of the theatre, by suiting the action to the word in the broadest and most intelligible

(1) What was originally said of DOWTON in this character, may we think with more propriety be said of MUNDEN'S personation. "His changes from the irritable to the yielding, from the angry to the tender, in *Old Dornton*, have so much nature that a spectator can with difficulty imagine them to be *designed* for effect. The gradual faltering of his voice from violence to softness as he is gradually won from testiness or anger, is like those beautiful semitones whose dropping difference is scarcely perceivable in a fine singer; and in the same manner, his rise from sullenness to gaiety is as imperceptible in its individual gradation.

Critical Essays.

manner. His *Peter Post Obit*, in "*Folly as it Flies*," is another of his excellent personations, although of itself it has perhaps few or none of those traits which coincide with his peculiar genius. An old simpleton totters from the country to town, hunting after legacies; he picks a quarrel with another veteran, twice as testy, and ten times more stupid than himself; he crowns his absurdity with a mock duel, upon which he prides himself vastly; and then he gets into a spunging house, from which he runs away. This is the sum of his adventures, and it will easily appear that they afford but little scope for the display of his powers: but it is in these meagre parts that the judgment of the actor and the possession of those powers are fully proved—as he renders delightful what in other hands would be scarce bearable. His triumph after the duel with *Cursitor*, is perhaps his best scene; the chuckling courageousness with which he waves his pistol, and the manner in which he braves the quack doctor, and, upon the slightest supposition of insult flings him his card, are exuberant of drollery. His *Lazarillo*, in "*Two Strings to your Bow*," may be deemed one of the best specimens of insolence, conceit, and ignorance, (with much good will, and a greater appetite, that nature, or art, ever stuffed into the composition of a valet,) now on the stage.

His *Captain Bertram*, in "*The Birth Day*," must not be forgotten, for it is also an unequalled performance—there is a variety in this character which renders it more agreeable than even his excellent portraiture of the old, affectionate and distracted father *Dornton*. It is of itself a well-drawn character;—soured with age, with illness, and with irritation, the *Captain* still is possessed of a large portion of the milk of human kindness. His anger at the fancied ill-treatment of his brother, and his regret at their unfortunate disagreement are faithfully and affectingly pourtrayed by Mr. M.: his unsuspecting confidence in Mrs. *Moral*, and his anger when *Jack Junk* ventures to suspect and abuse her, are admirable specimens of his power; but when angry with himself for the outrage he has offered to the honest intentions of *Jack*, by throwing away his tobacco box, he recovers himself, and tells him to fetch it again, he far exceeds any thing yet attempted in the comic line of

acting. Of the character of *Mr. Russet*, in the "*Jealous Wife*," he is the best representative we have beheld; the comedians in general throw an air of vulgarity about this part, which is not naturally demanded; for though that species of society which we denominate country gentlemen are not highly proverbial for their classical attainments or courtesy in behaviour, yet we seldom find an independent fox-hunter who is not, in some sort, more refined than a west country waggoner. *Marall*, in "*A New Way to Pay Old Debts*," is also reckoned one of his finest performances: for he does not merely confine himself to a delivery of the words, but he ably fills up the void of speech by the illustration of the most scientific acting; and we have seen few efforts better marked, upon the stage, than the gradations of his countenance, consequent to the insulting blow which he receives from his monstrous master: that alone should immortalize him. It is in this performance, as in fact every other, that he shews his penetrating judgment, by never suffering the business of the stage to be a moment suspended, where he is even the most remotely concerned.

His acting in *Moody*, in the "*Country Girl*," is altogether a fine tissue of natural, yet rich discrimination. It has all the characteristic points of bluntness in manner, and impetuosity in impulse, which the part demands, yet it never degenerates into coarseness or buffoonery. His pictures of rustics should not pass unnoticed:--*Coster Pearmain* for instance, is one of those admirable pieces of acting which set the performer upon a level with his author, and do more honour to the profession of the stage, than ten thousand tumid, bombastical, effusions of rant and noise with which certain gentlemen, who would fain be thought tragedians, annoy their auditors, and display the lofty contempt they entertain for nature and common sense. In conclusion, Mr. MUNDEN is the best living representative of that school of English comedy which is most conversant with the *broader* shades of humour. He was never fitted for a satirist; he is a bad conductor of keen wit; and of all characters in the world, he is the least fitted to shoot at the real or fictitious *vices* of an age. On the contrary, it is of the very genius of his humour to enjoy the *follies* of the time; he riots among them with all the pleasure of a youth

just let loose upon the novelties of the world. He yields to the intoxicating influence of his own exulting spirits; and if, while he figures, and struts about, overjoyed in the flow of those spirits, he be now and then betrayed into an expression of feature, or a tone of voice, not *exactly* within the rules of legitimate acting, yet he seems to have right to such *poetical license*, and his right is not disputed. It is only when extravagance of this kind is brought forward to keep in the *expiring embers* of talent, or is *substituted* for it, that it becomes wearisome to the most indulgent auditor. But MUNDEN, veteran as he is, has not yet suffered any considerable decay of energy. His style happily needs no great share of physical strength, and the volume of his voice remains as copious and as versatile as ever. To him for a long series of years, the votaries of mirth have been under the greatest obligations, and we trust this valuable support of the comic muse will yet long maintain that pre-eminent situation he now holds in the public estimation; and we doubt not but when his abilities can no longer be enjoyed, he will, like other great men, be duly appreciated and universally regretted.

The author of "*Theatrical Portraits*" lately published, appears to have a just relish for the acting of this facetious veteran, and we have therefore extracted his admirable lines, which cannot fail of proving acceptable to those of our readers who may not be possessed of that volume.

Mark this fair audience! see, on ev'ry face,
The tear of feeling claims its hallow'd place!
Look round on all, and let their sorrows tell,
He plays *Old Dornton*—need we say how well?
For, he has pow'r, by NATURE's gentler arts,
To raise one feeling in a thousand hearts;
To wake the slumb'ring passions, and draw forth
The tributary tear for fallen worth;
That noblest homage to an actor's skill;
Sincere, though mournful; eloquent, though still.

But, now, how chang'd this audience! all are gay!
See there the cause!—*Old Dozey* comes this way;
And every eye is beaming with delight,
At "*Past Ten o'Clock and a Rainy Night.*"

But let us turn to *Marall*; there we mark
How bright a flame may issue from a spark;
How fair a picture from a sketch may rise,
When skill the needful colouring supplies.
It is as if the goddess of his art
Had sought a being fit to act the part;
And then had made his comic pow'rsi ncrease,
To let the world behold her master-piece.

Nor must the Muse, in this her humble page,
Forget his scenes of garrulous old age.
There are, who think that we need only trace
The traits of age upon the wrinkled face;
But we those traits ev'n from his voice can borrow,
Which squeaks the old man's joy, and croaks the old man's sorrow.
His step is feeble, and his eyes are dim,
Whilst age and weakness seem to shake each limb;
And, as poor *Adam* totters from the stage,
We say,—"*Behold the picture of old age!*"
Oh! who hath seen his *Bramble*, and not felt
Each sterner feeling in his bosom melt.
Like snow on flow'rs, which, as the sun appears,
Catches his rays, and straight dissolves to tears?
And who, tho' vex'd with private griefs the while,
Could e'er refuse his *Brummagem* a smile?
His *Ephraim Smooth*; pert *Jumps*, the village dandy;
His *Rapid*, *Caustic*, *Cockletop*, and *Handy*?

Yet, some there are, who ever sternly aim
To seek out error, and o'erwhelm with blame;
Who view all merit with an evil eye,
And call each touch of art, buffoonery;
E'en as the locust, hov'ring o'er the earth,
Falls on the flow'r, to crush it in its birth,
So fall these rav'nous critics on their prey,
And draw the honied dews of gentle hope away.

Let these condemn thee, MUNDEN, in their lays;
Their praise is censure, and their censure, praise!
Let them still term thee the buffoon of art;
Be thou content to touch the feeling heart;

And raise fond smiles round beauty's dimpled chin,
Those beaming heralds of a joy within.

If 'tis buffoonery, for fancied woe,
To bid the tears of soften'd feeling flow;
If 'tis buffoonery, to cheer the breast,
And banish sorrow from her mournful nest;
If 'tis buffoonery, to represent
Each part as NATURE and his author meant;
If admiration be buffoon'ry's meed—
Then, then is MUNDEN a buffoon indeed!

H. S. V. D.

[*To be resumed.*]

MR. ELLISTON.

[*Resumed from page* 213.]

ROBERT WILLIAM ELLISTON was born in Orange Street, Bloomsbury, about the year 1774. His father (who was a watchmaker of eminence in Charles Street, Covent Garden) was the son of an eminent farmer at the village of Gidgrave, near Orford, in Suffolk. His late uncle was the Rev. Dr. ELLISTON, the much-esteemed master of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge,(1) who intended his nephew for the church, and took upon himself the entire superintendance and expense of his education, and placed him at St. Paul's School when nine years old. In our great public seminaries, it is usual at certain periods to allow the boys to recite before their school-fellows. The practice is laudable and beneficial; but as there is no food so gratifying to youthful vanity as the applause which usually follows such exhibitions, the successful declaimer is sometimes led to indulge ideas of his own, very foreign from the design of his master, or the wishes of his friends. In the year 1790, he

(1) In consequence of the death of this gentleman, Mr. ELLISTON is said to have come into the possession of £15,000.

delivered an English Thesis; of which this was the subject—"*nemo confidat nimium secundis*"—and the approbation he received on this and other occasions of a similar kind, was too flattering to be forgotten; from the extracted speeches of plays he soon turned to the plays themselves, and soon imagining himself the character he read, he imbibed an immediate inclination for the stage, and made his appearance as *Pierre* before a private audience at the Lyceum, in the Strand. This dramatic bias produced serious remonstrances, and finally anger from his relations,—but the *die was cast*, "young *Ammon* would go on." His fancy soared beyond the reach of prudence, and a disagreement ensuing with Dr. ROBARTS, he quitted St. Paul's without the consent of his friends, and like many other young men, animated by a spirit of adventure, prepared to throw himself on the protection of the world, by embracing a profession, of the principles, fatigue, and attendant distresses, of which he was utterly ignorant. He therefore accompanied a friend to Bath, and to procure a temporary means of subsistence, he engaged himself as a clerk in a lottery office, and remained in that capacity a few weeks till he found an opportunity of making his first theatrical essay in public. Whether it was that he doubted his capacity to perform a character of more consequence, or was willing to escape the general imputation of vanity, we are not able to decide, but contrary to the usual custom of young adventurers, he fixed on the very humble part of *Tressell (Richard III.)* for his *début*. He met with considerable approbation, but notwithstanding his success in his first efforts, it appears he was unfortunate in his desire of procuring an engagement, the company being full, and the manager of a provincial theatre frequently looking with a suspicious eye to the increased expenditure of twenty-five shillings per week: In consequence, however, of the recommendation of Mr. WALLIS (father of Miss WALLIS, who some time since performed at C.G.T.) who witnessed his efforts, he was engaged by the celebrated TATE WILKINSON, at York, where he experienced much disappointment and vexation (as the principal characters were all in the possession of other performers) and finding by this time that an actor's, no more than a statesman's bed, is not always a *bed of roses*, he be-

came sensible of his condition, and wrote to his uncle a supplicating letter for pardon and indulgence; still pleading, however, his partiality for the profession he had adopted, and expressing a desire to try his fortune on the London boards. His application having had the desired effects, he returned to London, and through the medium of professor MARTYN (so justly celebrated for his botanical researches and publications) another of his uncles, he obtained an interview with the late G. STEVENS, Esq. the editor of SHAKSPEARE, who introduced him to Mr. KEMBLE. This gentleman recommended him to study *Romeo* against the opening of the late splendid building of Drury Lane; but his patience being exhausted before the house could open, and his circumstances not being in the most affluent state he applied to Mr. DIMOND the Bath manager, then performing at the Richmond theatre, by whom he was immediately engaged—and instead of Drury Lane, he performed his *Romeo*, at Bath, 1793. His former efforts were not forgotten, and a combination of fortunate events, such as the indisposition of performers, &c. afforded a favourable opportunity of calling into action a versatility of powers, which was before unknown even to himself, and soon rendered him a distinguished favourite. His name was mentioned with high encomiums, and patronage and profit attended his exertions. When the new Drury opened in 1794, enquiry was made as to the terms which would be given him on his joining the company; he was offered *forty shillings* a week; but not choosing to *starve* in the metropolis on a paltry sum, the tardy offer of which was with difficulty obtained through the joint interest of Dr. FARMER, G. STEVENS, and KEMBLE, he preferred living in credit and affluence at Bath, by the independent exertion of his own unassisted abilities.

Our *Romeo* was soon to play the character of a lover on the stage of life; and he found a most lovely and interesting *Juliet* in the person and accomplishments of a beautiful young lady, a Miss RUNDALL, well known and admired in the most fashionable circles of Bath. Some impediments arose to the union, but they were removed by degrees, and their marriage took place on the 1st of June, 1796. Thus fortunate in his choice, and happy in domestic life, it is

more than probable he would have remained content with the laurels the inhabitants of Bath were daily entwining round his brow, had not a promise been given to Mr. COLMAN to perform at his theatre, and before the expiration of his honey-moon, he accordingly ventured to tread the London boards, June 24, 1796, in the arduous character of *Octavian* (*Mountaineers*), and *Vapour* (*My Grandmother*), in each of these parts his efforts were crowned with success(1) From his own *HoneyMoon*, down to Mr. TOBIN'S, and from thence until this moment his history presents nothing but a series of good fortune. On and off the stage his career has been uniformly prosperous.

Having thus fulfilled the promise he had made, he was obliged to return to Bath to close the theatrical campaign of 1796 according to the letter of his article with Mr. DIMOND. But Mr. COLMAN being aware of the value of Mr. ELLISTONS' youthful energies secured him for the remainder of the season. A powerful reason soon after evinced itself for the manager's attachment to this dramatic stripling. The failure of *The Iron Chest* on its original representation at Drury Lane, and the singular circumstances

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(1) The following Criticism is copied from LLOYD'S "*Evening Post*" of June 27, 1796, and will not we think be uninteresting at this distance of time.

"HAYMARKET THEATRE. The Play of the "*Mountaineers*" introduced a Mr. ELLISTON from the Bath Theatre, for the first time on the London Stage, in the Character of *Octavian*. He displayed proofs of just discrimination, and is possessed of a powerful voice tempered with modulation, a good person, and an expressive countenance. He appeared to avoid all imitations of the original (KEMBLE) and to rest entirely on his own judgment and conceptions. In the entertainment of "*My Grandmother*" he again came forward in *Vapour*, with the whimsicalities of which, however, he seemed to be by no means familiar.—It appears by the above criticism that his talents are greatly reversed, or the editors judgment very incorrect, as his *Vapour* now stands unrivalled.

attending it, are well known to *amateurs* (1.) Mr. COLMAN was doubtless eager to preserve his literary fame, and holding the powers of our young actor in no inconsiderable estimation, determined on risking the performance of that play at his own theatre and Mr. E. assumed the part of Sir *Edward Mortimer* to the entire satisfaction of the public and the author. This circumstance gave rise to much conversation and criticism at the time and did the young actor essential service: for the play which *died* on the third night at Drury Lane was revived by the skill and animation of Mr. E. and he enjoys all the fame of having restored it to the life it now enjoys. In the course of the same season he acquired considerable celebrity from his personification of *Sheva* in *The Jew*.

The growing reputation of Mr. ELLISTON at length induced Mr. HARRIS the manger of Covent Garden Theatre to engag,ehim to play at stated intervals, an indulgence which was granted by Messrs. PALMER and DIMOND with whom he had now renewed his articles for three years. The novelty of this undertaking occasioned considerable jealousy in the Green room—and the celerity of his movements, so necessary to enable him to fulfill his duty, both at Bath, and at London procured him the appellation of "The *Telegraph*, or Fortnight actor." His exertions in this way however, did not answer the expectations of either party, and the arrangement being soon found to be mutually inconvenient, Mr. HARRIS was induced at the earnest solicitation of Mr. ELLISTON to cancel the articles. During the following summer he resumed his situation at the Haymarket with the same success as before, and then returned to Bath, and also performed at various places in the Country. Being much countenanced by the Royal Family his visits to Weymouth in particular were very frequent and very profitable: at this period Mr. COLMAN selected a company of performers from different Country theatres and applied to Mr. E, to take the stage management, and the lead as an actor. He accordingly returned to London; and Mr. COLMAN's scheme was infinitely indebted for its success to

(1) Vide Vol. iv pages 117. 161. 216. for a full account of this Dramatic squabble.

his enterprizing spirit and the promptitude and versatility of his professional abilities. Mr. MATTHEWS also at this time distinguished himself as a comedian of genuine merit.

Mr. ELLISTON's engagement was for three seasons. At the close of the second summer having received offers from the proprietors of Drury Lane such as it had been folly to reject, he made his appearance at length on the boards of Old Drury as *Rolla* not as he would have done in 1794 as "steward, substitute and lowly factor" at *forty shillings* a week, but at a salary and with privileges, seldom before bestowed on any performer. The secession of Mr. KEMBLE paved the way to Mr. E's promotion to the highest rank and most enviable honours of his profession.

[*Concluded in the Supplement.*]

HORÆ CRITICÆ.

No. III.

ADDISON.

"Languescit tragica vis: redundat copia et inanitate verborum."

Jac. Becanini, Opuscula Tom 2. p. 97.

I have often wondered at the high reputation which ADDISON enjoys as a tragic writer, especially as it is founded upon one play and that of a very mediocre description. Various causes contributed to the unprecedented success of *Cato* when it was first performed. The Author's literary character was deservedly high, and he had a very extensive connexion with the persons who at that time guided the public taste. Party spirit was carried to a greater length than at any other period of our history. The *whigs* considered *Cato* as one of the opponents of arbitrary power, and of course supported a play written in his honour. The *Tories*, being out of place, styled themselves the friends of the people, and contributed as large a share of applause as their enemies. Under such circumstances it is not surprising that a play should succeed, but it is surprising that

it should maintain a place among our stock pieces when these circumstances have so long ceased to have any influence. It would be difficult to select even from the "rejected Theatre" a tragedy possessing more positive absurdities and fewer merits. Those who wish to see its follies exposed in a most admirable manner, may consult DENNIS'S "*Remarks*", some good extracts from which are in JOHNSONS "*Lives*". I shall only observe the incongruity produced by preserving the unity of place, which makes love conspiracy, fighting, &c. &c. all go on in one room. The whole scenic illusion must be destroyed by seeing people go out just in time for others to come in and settle their business, and return again exactly on its conclusion without either party suspecting what the other is about. The plan of *Sempronius* to disguise himself as *Juba*, and to make use of his guards, can only be equalled by the happy rencounter between him and *Juba*, who kills the counterfeit, and takes the guards prisoners; and the production of *Cato* in his great chair, when dying, winds up the climax of absurdity in a very appropriate manner. I shall not enlarge on these defects, as they have already been noticed, and I do not think the language and sentiments, tho' better than the plot, deserving of any particular attention. They are mostly common place and always unimpressive. The diction is indeed sometimes plainer than prose: "*Cato* has *used me ill*", says *Sempronius*, and all the other characters say something as little suited to the Tragic muse.

If "*The Drummer*" was written by ADDISON, as we have good reason to believe, we may safely say that had he turned his attention to comedy he would have been one of our most agreeable writers. "*The Drummer*" seems to be a hasty unfinished effort, but it shows that its author was capable of doing better and breathes the true spirit of comedy in many of its scenes. Nothing can be more natural than the alarm of the servants at the ghost and conjuror, and the infidel beau is admirably supported throughout.

It is on his character as an Essayist that ADDISON must rely for immortality; and in it he is in a great measure unrivalled. Matters of taste, fashion and criticism are discussed in so easy and natural a manner in the "*Tatler*",

"*Spectator*", and "*Guardian*", that few can hope to rival and none to surpass it; but his greatest merit seems to lie in his descriptions of life and manners. The exquisitely delicate humour of *Sir Roger de Coverly*, Mr. and Mrs. *Freeman*, and various other characters introduced in his essays, could proceed from none but a writer of genius and a close observer of the world. Yet there is such a vein of kind-heartedness, such a perfect freedom from ill nature or severity running through the whole, that we cannot help feeling convinced of the amiable disposition of the author.

As a moralist ADDISON has been praised far beyond his merits. There is a want of energy in his morals, not less conspicuous than want of passion in his tragedy. We have elegant language and good sentiments; but nothing forcible or convincing. Indeed he generally seems to labour to prove matters that no one is inclined to dispute. We have obvious thoughts beaten out to the leaf by being expressed over and over again in all the inflexions and periphrases our language will admit, we have a parade of argument; and a superfluity of illustration; and when we come to the end we learn something as novel and important as: "Virtue is its own reward"; "Six times seven are forty two"; "Nine tailors make a man"; and "when we do wrong we ought to be ashamed of ourselves."

As a poet ADDISON has the merit of elegance and correctness. His ideas are seldom new or striking, his language is never very forcible; and his conceptions are generally weak: yet he never offends: If there is little to praise there is less to blame. "*The Campaign*" has been justly characterised as a versified gazette; but it contains some fine passages. His translations from OVID are very well done, and his minor pieces are often pleasing.

To conclude in a few words: ADDISON was not a great writer and he is not entitled to a place among our first authors; but he has one merit which few others possess:-there is not one passage throughout his works which can excite an unpleasant or unfavourable sensation in the reader; and during his whole life, tho' continually employed in compositions which hardly allowed revision from the haste with which they were published, he never wrote a line which on his death-bed he might wish to blot.

CINGETORIX.

A CRITICAL ESSAY ON THE GENIUS OF SHAKSPEARE.

[*Resumed from page* 233.]

The genius of SHAKSPEARE seems to have principally consisted in the strength and energy of his feelings. It is generally asserted, that no man was better acquainted with the human heart; but it is certain, that his acquaintance with it must be understood in a very qualified sense; and when properly understood, we can more easily determine the character of the spirit which he has communicated to his writings. SHAKSPEARE knew the human heart not as it exists in a state of polished society, but as it exists in a state placed midway between the confines of barbarism and civilization, where there is sufficient wealth and power to rouse ambition to unholy deeds, and to awaken all the fears and hopes which variously agitate and disturb the current of human life: where knowledge is sufficiently extended to instruct its possessors in all the means by which the images of hope and the anticipated gratifications of unsatisfied desire may be realized and secured; but where its informing rays have not as yet disclosed the sweeter charms of milder passions and more tempered energies; nor moulded into existence the gentler affection of the soul, nor the refined feelings and sympathies of a cultivated mind. There is nothing in SHAKSPEARE to win the soul to tender delight. The softer images and association of refined hope, that *Hope* which COLLINS paints "with eyes so fair," sparkle not in the creations of his muse. Every thing in him is ardent and impetuous; and all his principal characters are more or less under the dominion of strong and turbulent feelings, while his low characters are often affectedly witty and grossly vulgar. All this, however, is natural, and as it ought to be; for there is nothing unnatural in vulgar wit, gross manners, or turbulent and headstrong passion. All feelings, passions, and propensities, are natural, however unnatural and disgust-

ing they may appear to refined and delicate minds, provided they agree with the character to which they are ascribed. When we talk of unnatural feelings, we either mean feelings that are not suitable to the character in which they appear, or we mean something which we do not understand. The human mind can form no idea of a feeling unnatural in itself, because a feeling that never existed in the human mind cannot be conceived even in imagination; and as all the feelings of which we can form any conception may exist in the mind, they must be all natural, for, if they were not, they could not be felt. The feelings of the philosopher, as well as those of a savage, are all produced by certain causes, such as external or moral influences; nor can any feeling, sensation, emotion, or passion, ever find admittance into the human breast without a cause sufficient to produce it. If, then, every feeling proceeds from a certain cause, and cannot exist without it, all feelings are not only natural, but it is impossible for one feeling to be more natural than another; as they all proceed from causes which are adequate to their production. To suppose them unnatural, is to suppose that causes should not produce their effects, and that such effects taking place is contrary to nature. The turbulent, boisterous, and impetuous passions of one man are, therefore, as natural as the mild and moral feelings of another, though they are not so reasonable. The latter renders all his feelings subservient to the controul of reason, and the precepts which she inculcates; while the former yields to the impulse of his own nature, and spurns the dictates of reason and morality. It is therefore natural, that the passions of him who refuses to be guided by reason should be contrary to reason, and extremely different from the passions of him who conforms entirely to the restrictions which she imposes. The feelings of both are natural, though the reverse of each other; and we could only pronounce them unnatural if they happened to be the same. We can, therefore, call a feeling unnatural only when it is repugnant to the nature of the character to whom it is attributed; but while it is such, as a sufficient cause can produce in such a nature, it is as natural as the most refined feeling that ever thrilled in the breast of sensibility. It is natural for a man of stub-

born and inflexible honesty to have a rooted dislike to fraud and deception, and therefore no cause would be powerful enough to wind him round in a moment, and make him enamoured of them :

Nemo repente fuit turpissimus.

The love of theft would consequently be unnatural in such a man, and it would be stepping beyond the bounds of nature in any writer to attribute it to him, while it would be perfectly natural in a rogue; while the love of honesty would be just as unnatural in the latter, as the love of deception in the former. All feelings and propensities, therefore, are perfectly natural, provided they suit the general character of the person to whom they are ascribed. If SHAKSPEARE, then, has not painted refined feelings, we must not suppose, for a moment, that his delineations of the heart are less natural or correct. He has painted human nature in its deeper and bolder shades, such as it came from the hand of its Creator. He has presented to us the marked and masculine features which it assumes in its original formation, or at least before the traces of this original structure are softened and shaded over by the gloss of art and the influence of cultivation. I would not, however, maintain, that he is always natural in the expressions which he puts into the mouths of his characters. Strained or affected sentiments will never become those who are not represented to us as affected characters; and yet nothing is more common with SHAKSPEARE. When *Prospero* tells *Miranda*, in the "*Tempest*," how he, and she, when a child, were driven out of Milan, she exclaims,

——— "Alack for pity!
I not remembering how I cried out then,
Will cry it o'er again; it is a hint
That wrings mine eyes to it."

If *Miranda* could not be moved to tears by the circumstance of her banishment, it is unnatural to suppose, that she would weep, merely because she forgot it; but if it was her banishment that made her weep, her tears ought not to be attributed to a different cause. Numerous instances of this kind are to be met with in SHAKSPEARE, and it can only be accounted for by that passion for effect which was common to all the writers of his age. SHAKSPEARE, indeed,

could paint nothing well that did not require strong colouring. Where the softer affections were to be described, he had neither the tenderness nor the sweetness that could give them appropriate expression. He abounded in feeling, but they were the feelings of ardent and vigorous natures not the love-sick emotions of an ELOISA or a SAPPHO. But though he was unsuccessful in delineatiug the tender feelings and affections, yet he was equally unsuccessfull where feeling was not concerned. In simple narration he is heavy, tedious, and uninteresting, because their is nothing to urge him forward. He is always great on a great occasion but where the occasion does not inspire him, he is clumsy, and unskilful. This must have solely arisen from his want of acquired learning. The stores from which he drew his portraits of the human heart, in all it's disguise, existed in his own mind; but when the heart was not the subject of his description, he had no internal monitor to consult with; and his acquaintance with general literature was too limited to afford him that information without which no genius could embellish an abstract or general subject with which it had no previous acquaintance. He was always sure of grasping nature, where nature only was to be described. but when his subjects led him to observations unconnected with her operations, he labours unsuccessfully. Dr. JOHNSON therefore observes, with great justice, that whenever he attempts to display his learning, "he seldom escapes without the pity or resentment of his reader." SHAKSPEARE, in fact, was only acquainted with the history of the human heart, the appearances of external nature, and the influence of these appearances on the human mind; but this knowledge he acquired from his own feelings, and simple observation. He knew therefore only how the heart is affected by general nature, for he was but indifferently acquainted with the particular manners of particular nations, because this required an extent of reading, and an exercise of memory, with which he did not choose to burthen himself. Where nature, then, was the subject of his pen, no man excelled him; where she was not, no man was more affected or ridiculous. POPE was not, therefore, wrong, when he said, "no man wrote better or worse than him." It is justly objected to him,

that his Romans are not sufficiently Roman, nor his kings completely royal; which arose from his ignorance of Roman manners, and his little intercourse with kings and princes. So far as they acted like mankind in general, he described them faithfully; but wherein they differed from the generality of mankind he did not exactly know, because mere genius could not furnish him with the information. Reading alone could remedy this defect, and SHAKSPEARE was always too full of his own thoughts to seek for information from the knowledge of others; a knowledge which, at best, could only supply him with facts, and not with ideas. He was, indeed, well acquainted with the local habits of his own countrymen, and with the phraseology of mechanics, artizans and sailors: and if he were not, all the powers of human genius would never have enabled him to describe them so correctly; for as local habits and manners do not arise from the general operations of nature in the human breast, they can only be known by actual experience. Hence it is that he failed in describing Roman manners. He is not justifiable, however, in having neglected to make himself intimately acquainted with them before he attempted his "*Coriolanus*," and *Julius Cæsar*;" for without this acquaintance, inspiration alone could enable him to describe them faithfully. Dr. JOHNSON, indeed, endeavours to defend him, on this head, against the censure of the critics "SHAKSPEARE," however always makes nature triumph over accident. His story requires Romans or Kings; but he thinks only on men, This, in my opinion, is a weak defence. Nature cannot triumph over accident, because men will always act differently in different situations. A Roman will always act like a Roman, and differently, not only from an Englishman, but from a native of any other country, in all the minor and indifferent circumstances of life. He is the creature of particular and local habits and influences; and these habits and influences become a second nature, of which he cannot divest himself, because he is unacquainted with any other. It is only when he is called upon by a principle of action, founded in human nature antecedent to habit and local influences, that he will act like an Englishman or a Spaniard. An honest Roman disdains to tell an untruth, because he knows it is

beneath the dignity of a man: so does the honest Turk or Russian; and so do honest men of all nations. He relieves the distressed, and so do they. He stands up in defence of his country if it be unjustly invaded, and so do they; but in all the indifferent circumstances of life, where choice and not duty urges him to action, he yields to the general character, peculiar genius, and national temper of his countrymen; and here he will be generally found to differ from the Englishman, the Spaniard and the natives of all other countries; and he who describes him acting or talking in a style that is foreign to his national manners, violates nature, and only renders him a subject of ridicule to every one who is well acquainted with them. The same observation applies to kings and senators; and therefore, though Dr. JOHNSON defends SHAKSPEARE in going into the senate house in search of a buffoon, I cannot help thinking, that he might have sought for him elsewhere with more propriety. In all cases, however, where SHAKSPEARE has failed, we can trace his failure, not to the want of genius, but to the want of that information and judgment which the most elevated genius can never acquire by it's own incoherent or unaided energies.

(To be resumed.)

SHAKSPEARE'S *IAGO.*

MR. DRAMA,

The character of *Iago*, both as written and represented, has given rise to a greater variety of discordant criticism than any other in the whole range of SHAKSPEARE'S plays: your readers will perhaps not dislike to see what the Irish critics say on the subject. The following is from a paper called *Carrick's Morning Post*;— SAM SAM'S SON.

One of the most substantial errors foolishly attributed to *Othello* is, the egregious simplicity with which the Moor is represented as falling into the snares of *Iago*. One cause which with us has contributed to render this fault still more glaring, is the error into which those who have represented the part of *Iago* have fallen. *Iago* is, without doubt, one

of the most difficult characters for personation in the range of the whole drama. Unlike dramatic villains who are mixed with lofty language and harmonious periods, he is content to creep through a serious of disgusting atrocities, without uttering one idea capable of ensuring even that awe with which men are regarded when guilty of perpetrating superior crimes. It is his actions alone that are superhuman in vice; his language is plain, easy, and familiar. Conscious of the difficulties attendant on the representation of such a character, most actors have endeavoured to supply the defect, as they thought of the poet. For that purpose every nerve was put in motion, every exertion made, but in vain; they only rendered *Othello* ridiculous, who must have been blinder than rage itself, at not seeing the straining and anxiety of *Iago* to accomplish his purpose. Even the innovating genius of KEAN was here completely foiled; in vain did he call to his assistance the insinuating smile of *Richard*, or the inveterate rancour of *Shylock*, all was too evident, too undisguised, and he was compelled to relinquish the character, doubtless imputing his failure to the carelessness or inattention of the author himself.

But it was reserved for Mr. YOUNG to demonstrate, that the lameness of his predecessor's representations was attributable not to any weakness inherent in the part itself, but to a want of right conception. Accordingly his performance of *Iago*, last Tuesday, was as perfect a piece of acting as the stage can boast of at present. True, there were in it no sudden transitions from one passion to another, taking the audience by surprise; nor no ebullitions of stormy rage, succeeded by a gentle calm—wooing, as it were, applause; nothing was introduced but what the part admitted, and the author intended; but all was tranquil and undisturbed, as in the cool security of one whose deep laid plans succeeded to his wish; in the presence of others his demeanour was such as would naturally give him the reputation of

"A fellow of exceeding honesty,"

to his possession of which quality frequent allusions are made. The scene in which *Iago* first communicates his poison was played in a masterly style by Mr. YOUNG; here it was, in particular, that his superior skill shone forth. Not

once was he tempted to forget that he was still in the presence of *Othello*, nor did one self congratulory smile escape him. Nothing could equal the refined hypocrisy with which he uttered the following passages:—

"Good name in man or woman, good my Lord,
"Is the immediate jewel of our souls."——
"O beware my Lord of jealousy."

and

"There's matter in't, indeed, if he be angry."

But these passages, though admirable, were scarcely superior to the rest, which altogether formed the most complete picture of a tissue of dissimulation, unbroken, save when in the soliloquies he unburdens his whole soul, and speaks and acts like *Iago* himself.

"And what's he then that says I play the villain?"

Perhaps after all, the character itself, however represented may not seem to demand such high praise, being evidently inferior in consequence and interest to *Othello*; but surely the more credit due to Mr. YOUNG, who could make it appear so prominent and who, by chasteness of conception and execution, has rescued the play itself, in a great degree, from one of its greatest blemishes.

STANZAS

Addressed to MISS M. TREE, *on her performance of Clari in the opera of "Clari; or, The Maid of Milan."*

"Chacun croit retrouver dans cette mélodie, comme dans l'astre pur et tranquille de la nuit, l'image de ce qu'il souhaite sur la terre." CORINNE.

Beautiful *Clari*, ne'er shall I forget
Till life has ceas'd within this heart to beat,
Thy drooping form like some fair lilly wet
With unkind storms, so melancholy sweet.

Thy look with love and innocence replete—
Thy faltering step, that told the agony
That thrill'd thee, when suspicion of deceit
In him thou lov'dst came o'er thee witheringly—
All sunk too deeply e'er to fade from memory.

Yes, *Clari*, these alone would have assign'd thee
Praise from each heart where aught like feeling dwelt.
But oh! there was a moment which enshrined thee
In the soul's deepest cell—'twas when we felt
Each passion into one emotion melt
As o'er us stole thy plaintive "*Home, sweet Home*"
I could that moment at thy feet have knelt,
I felt if blest with thee I would not roam
From humblest roof to dwell 'neath fortune's proudest dome.

It was Sicilia's village melody
Simple yet sweet, plaintive and sorrowing,
And thou didst pour it forth as plaintively
As e'er it floated on the balmy wing
Of Summer's evening zephyr. Pathos' string
Was touched in every heart,—the wildly gay
Ceased the loud laugh—Envy forgot to sting,
Love stopp'd his tale to list to such a lay,
And admiration's meed e'en party deign'd to pay.

I've seen thee often, as the light of heart,
The sorrowful, the tender, but I ne'er
Beheld thee so much excellence impart
To any object of the poet's care,
As to the interesting Milan fair.
I've seen thee often, and as oft admired
The charms of form and mind fall'n to thy share.
But ne'er was with such soul-felt rapture fir'd,
As that with which my heart by *Clari* was inspired.

1823. G. J. De Wilde.

ILLNESS OF THEATRICAL PERFORMERS.

MR. DRAMA.

Permit me to call your attention to the illiberal insinuations, and malignant, though impotent attempts at wit, with which the press but too frequently abounds, in regard to the illness of theatrical performers. Of late, it has become almost a fashion with certain ephemeral scribes, on the indisposition of an actor or actress being announced as a reason of non-appearance, to seek some unworthy pretext, or latent motive for the absence of the individual. Not that the writer himself has any probable grounds for asserting or even suspecting the existence of such duplicity; but he cannot lose the opportunity of saying, what he conceives to be a clever thing, and which the reader nine times out of ten, pronounces an insipid one. Hence the ingenuity and originality displayed in the puns upon *Love*, *Tree*, and *Bunn*; hence the *Young and Macready fevers*, and *hoc genus omne*.

Still the mischief-making tendency of such articles, is partly accomplished, and the reader even while he marvels at the stupidity of the comment, very possibly gives full credence to the fact affirmed in the text. That performers have frequently disappointed the managers and the audience from petty jealousies, and private pique, I am far from denying; but does it for that reason follow, that the character of a respectable individual, simply because he is a public personage, is to be wantonly compromised or calumniated by "every puny whipster" of the press, who may think proper to draw his pen against it?

That sex is no protection from such unmanly assailants, has been sufficiently instanced in the gallantry of the late attacks upon Miss TREE. But I more particularly regret what I conceive to be the case, that the dread of these ungenerous insinuations, has more then once prompted a performer to make an attempt, when the state of his health should have induced him to abstain from it. Let me ask any one who witnessed Mr. KEAN's *début* this season, (although the mere pantomime of that great actor is worth

the finished efforts of most other tragedians,) whether his physical energies were competent, in his feeble state, to such exertions as the giant conceptions of his soul demanded. Yet I am glad that he did appear, to exhibit in his own person, an unanswerable refutation of the disgraceful rumours in general circulation, that his illness has been but feigned, and his absence from the stage, the result of feelings, which a mind like his would disdain.

I may likewise say in regard to Mr. SHERWIN's first appearance in *Dandie Dinmont*, that, after the unaccountable manner in which this promising and ingenious young man, has been kept from public view, I was gratified at seeing him in the hero of "*Charlie's Hope*;" since, in spite of his weak state of health, there shone out the soul within, the true *vis comica*, the genuine humour, the admirable rusticity, which rendered the whole performance, the most delightful thing of the kind, since the decease of the unrivalled EMERY. But most will, I believe, concur with me, that the evident debility, which at times considerably affected his voice, might have justified him in strict prudence, in deferring the gratification, which his presence afforded to the audience.

Surely, Mr. DRAMA, the members of a profession, so exposed both from their feelings and exertions, to the effects of occasional indisposition, which, even when not severe, (1) might materially affect their reputation, ought to be exempt from the shafts of coarse insinuation and brutal jocularity; and I shall be happy, if these few remarks, should have any tendency to render the effects of such weapons less injurious to their intended victims.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

Ω.

(1) Suppose *only* a *slight* attack of *tooth-ache*.

SHAKSPEARE'S CONTEMPORARIES.

MR. DRAMA.

Should you conceive the following short notices of some of SHAKSPEARE'S *coadjutors and contemporaries, of sufficient interest to merit a place in your elegant miscellany, by laying them before your readers you will confer an obligation upon*

Your obedient servant,

Great Malvern, Dec. 4, 1823.

E. M.

RICHARD BURBAGE.

We will begin with BURBAGE, who, to borrow the expression of POPE, "the first in merit as the first in place" during the life-time of our immortal bard sustained with high and universal approbation, the principal character in most of his celebrated tragedies.

In the part of *Richard III.* it is supposed by many men of the present day, that BURBAGE has never been equalled, and although those who remember the departed excellence of GARRICK and COOKE, or have witnessed the animated performance of KEAN in his representation of the hunch backed tyrant, will pause ere they acquiesce in the truth of the supposition; yet when we recollect that BURBAGE, in addition to his own acknowledged theatrical abilities, had the advantage of consulting on all dubious or obscure points, the greatest dramatic genius of that or any other age, we cannot deny its claim to extreme probability.

His delineation of the arduous and wayward character of *Hamlet*, and his performance of *Brutus*, *Coriolanus*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and *Lear*, are noticed by contemporary writers as being of peculiar excellence. The following character of this admirable performance, which is given by FLETCHER in his "Short Discourses on the English stage" may not prove unworthy the attention even of some of our most celebrated tragedians of the present day.

"He was a delightful Proteus, so wholly transforming himself into his parts, and putting off himself with his

cloaths, that he never (even in the tyring house) assumed himself again until the play was done. He had all the parts of an excellent actor, animating his words with speaking and his speech with action, his audience being never more glad than when he was speaking, nor more sorry than when he held his peace; yet even then he was an excellent actor still; *never failing in his part when he had done speaking, but with his looks and gesture maintaining it still to the height.*"

The father of BURBAGE was himself an actor, and is supposed to have been a countryman of our immortal poet. RICHARD BURBAGE, the subject of this memoir, was born in the year 1563, consequently at the period of his decease 1619, was 56 years of age: he was buried in the church of St. Leonard, Shoreditch, on the 19th of March, 1619, where the following short and piquant epitaph was placed upon his tomb—

"EXIT BURBAGE."

An epitaph on this celebrated tragedian was likewise found in the MS. papers of the Sloan. Museum, which, was it not calculated to show the high degree of estimation in which our actor was held, from the doggrel style of its metre, might have been again consigned to the oblivion from which it has been reserved.

Epitaph on BURBAGE, *the Player.*

"This life's a play scann'd out by nature's arte
Were every man hath his allotted parte
This man has now (as many more can tell)
Ended his part, and he hath acted well.
The play now ended, think his grave to be
The detiring house of his sad tragedie;
Where to give his fame this, be not afraid,
Here lies the best tragedian ever plaid."

JOHN HEMINGE.

JOHN HEMINGE, joint manager and lessee of the Globe Theatre, is likewise spoken of as an eminent tragic performer, but as the only character in which he was parti-

cularly distinguished is "that king of good fellows" *Falstaffe*, we may safely infer that tragedy was by no means his forte.

He was born in 1566, at the village of Shottery, near Stratford-upon-Avon, and it is highly probable that through his medium, and not by the means generally described, SHAKSPEARE obtained his first introduction to the stage.

We find the name of HEMINGE conjoined with that of BURBAGE, SHAKSPEARE, &c., in the licence granted by JAMES I. to the Globe company of comedians, authorising their undisturbed representations of dramatic performances, and likewise in the grant of scarlet and velvet, which was allowed every second year by his Majesty, (for the purpose of making cloaks) to the players; he is also mentioned as a principal performer in that company of comedians, who on the invitation of the above-mentioned monarch, paid a visit to the Scottish court and capital during the reign of Queen ELIZABETH.

Although he commenced performer only, HEMINGE soon became by dint of perseverance and good fortune, a principal proprietor of the Globe, and had entirely relinquished acting some years before his death. HEMINGE published in conjunction with CONDELL, a fellow manager, the first complete edition of SHAKSPEARE'S plays. William HEMINGE, son to the subject of the memoir, after the death of his father commenced dramatic poet, and in the year 1640, produced a comedy called the "*Mad-cap.*" He likewise was author of two other plays, the "*Cataract*" and "*Jew's Tragedy*," both of which are probably lost.

HEMINGE made his "final exit" on the 10th of October, 1634, in the 68th year of his age, and was buried in the church of St. Mary's, Aldermanbury. It is supposed, he died of the plague which about that period raged in London so violently, and on which occasion all the theatres were ordered to be closed.

(To be continued.)

A VIEW OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE

THEATRIC DECLAMATION

OF THE

ANCIENTS AND THE MODERNS,

With some Hints respecting the latter.

1. Theatric declamation was very different among the ancients, to what it is and ought to be with us, from the nature of the thing itself, and from the difference of circumstances. Numberless passages in QUINTILIAN, and other ancient historians, critics and grammarians, evidently prove that the ancient dramatic declamation was subservient to the rules of the musical rythmus; and by this according to ARISTIDES, (1) their action, as well as recital, was regulated. But to explain this seeming paradox, it will be necessary to make here some preliminary remarks. The ancients gave a much more extensive signification to the word music (musica), than we do, which they derived from the muses, or at least from some of them. It is fot this reason, that the same ARISTIDES and QUINTILIAN defined it to be "an art that teacheth all that relates to the use of the voice, and the manner of performing all the motions of the body with grace:" Ars decoris in vocibus et motibus. Therefore poetry, declamation, dancing pantomimes, and many other gestures and exercises, were subservient to this art.

2. That part of general music, which taught the art of declamation and gesture according to the rules of an established method (and which we perform by instinct, or at most by the aid of common sense) was distinguished by the name "hypocritic music;" and this musical art was called by the Greeks "orchesis," and by the Romans "saltatio." It was however, so far from being an advantage to the ancients to have this musical art which we have not, that it was, on the contrary, a mark of great imperfection. For in the first place it was an instance of high absurdity, to re-

(1) De Musica, lib. 1.

present a tragedy, or comedy, before an audience of twenty thousand people, the far greatest part of whom could neither hear, nor see what passed to any good purpose, unless they were possessed of organs which we have not. The theatres of London and Paris, may conveniently contain a thousand persons; and that is found sufficient in the most populous cities, where there are several places of entertainment open on the same day, and where the people are reasonable enough to succeed each other in their diversions. As the features of the face could not be distinguished at so great a distance, much less the alterations of countenance, they had resourse to masks, a wretched, childish invention that destroyed all the strength and variety of expression. Their action became extravagant, and at the same time subservient to a regular mechanism; which prevented all the refinement, and all the pleasure of surprise, in the performance, and must have had an effect horribly disagreeable to those who were placed near the stage.

3. The egregious imperfection of their language likewise, which consisted of syllables long and short, whose duration was determined by a set measure of time, and their manner of turning these syllable, after the method of the orchesis of the Greeks, was another disadvantage. For by this means they determined by notes or characters placed after the long and short syllables, not only the nature, but the duration of each action. Now nothing could be more affected, more constrained and disgustful, than such a method of declaiming. How far superior in this respect are the moderns, who consult nature alone in their theatric declamation; who can make the audience hear each sigh, who can accompany it with a proper attitude; who can incessantly vary their action; who can seize the lucky moment, and make the countenance fully express the sensations of the mind! Nature does all here; and art, infinitely inferior to nature, did all among the ancients. Modern declamation cannot be subservient to a musical rythmus, seeing we speak rapidly, and without affectation. Our actors learn their art without art, assisted by reflection; and they arrive at a degree of excellence infinitely greater, by a method far more simple, and by efforts incomparably more easy.

4. We do not, however, presisely know what the theatric

declamation of the ancients was; nor what were the musical instruments which accompanied that declamation. The title to the "*Eunuch*" of TERENCE says, for example, "that *Flaccus*, the Freedman of CLAUDIUS, made the music of that piece, in which he employed the two flutes, the right and the left." These flutes, it is likely, gave the tone to the actor, which must have had a very odd effect on the audience. Most of the ancient pieces have similar titles. But as this art has happily no place in modern declamation, we shall say no more of it, but pass to matters of real utility.

5. We think there is good reason to believe, moreover, that the most polished nations of Europe do not accompany their discourses, in general, with so many gesticulations as the Greeks, the Romans, and other inhabitants of warm climates. They appear to have found the method of animating a discourse, and giving it expression, by the simple inflections of the voice, and by the features of the countenance; which is far more decent, more just and rational, than all those contortions which perpetually derange the natural attitude of the body and its members, and give the speaker the air of an harlequin.

6. Expression, therefore, forms at once the essence and the end of declamation: and the means of producing it consists, in a pronunciation that is sonorous, distinct, and pleasing, supported by an action that is decent and proper to the subject. If the best dramatic poet has need of a good declaimer or actor, to make his writings produce their proper effect, the actor has likewise need of a good poet to enable him to please and affect by the action; for it is to little purpose, that he endeavours to charm his auditory by uniting with nature all the powers of art, if the poet has not furnished him with sentiments that are rational and affecting.

7. The actor, in studying his part before a large mirror, where he can see his whole figure, in order to determine the most proper expressions for every thought, should consult nature, and indeavour to imitate her. But, in this imitation, he should take care not to make too servile a copy. He has this to observe, in common with his colleagues: viz. that the theatre is intended to exhibit an imi-

tation of nature, and not nature itself. Tragedy and comedy form pictures of human life; but these pictures are also pieces of perspective, which require strokes somewhat stronger than nature, that they may be discerned at a distance. The actor is elevated to a considerable height from the ground; he is surrounded by scenery, he is separated from the audience by the orchestra, and he speaks in verse; all this is not natural; but the spectator is to accede to this necessary illusion, in order to promote his own pleasure, which would not be so great as it is, were all these matters otherwise disposed. Declamation, therefore, should somewhat exceed, but never lose sight of nature.

8. The tone of an actor's voice should be natural, but regulated by the extent of the theatre; sufficiently loud to be heard by all the audience, but not so violent as to rend their ears. A pure and graceful pronunciation, without any provincial accent, is likewise a great merit in an actor; and he should always habituate himself to speak in a manner perfectly distinct. It is a capital point in the pronouncing of verse, not to separate the two hemistichs, by resting too long on the cæsura in the middle, or dwelling on the end of each hemistich: for by so doing, the actor falls into a monotony, an insufferable uniformity of cadence, in a piece that consists of some thousand lines. The gradations of the voice demand also a very judicious observance. The actor, who begins in a high tone, will find it very difficult to sustain it throughout the whole piece: and he, who clamours incessantly, will find his lungs fail him in those parts, where the vehemence of passion requires the strongest efforts. If I may be allowed the expression, the strongest touches, the boldest figures, will not there stand out from he picture in a striking manner.

9. The deportment of an actor should be constantly graceful, decent, and properly adopted ta the character he represents. An old man has a different position of body from a young petit maitre, an aged queen from a young princess; a noble gallant from a valet de chambre, &c. A rational observance of nature, and of the best actors, are here the surest guides. The same may be said of the action of the hands, the theatric step, &c. An inanimated figure, a body in the position of a statue, and hands immoveable, are

as displeasing in the scene, as a player whose incessant gesticulation resembles the action of a puppet.

10, Every actor who aspires to make his art something more than mechanical, will (after reading the piece attentively through) begin by enabling himself readily to repeat his part, that the defect of his memory may not embarrass his action. When he is so far a master of it, he will make it the subject of serious reflection in his closet; endeavour to seize the true sense of the author; and to find out that expression of each sentiment and passion, which is the most natural, the most striking, and best adapted to the stage; and which he will cultivate by repeated essays, till he is able to render it in its full force.

HARRY THUNDER.

31*st Dec.* 1823.

THEATRICAL INQUISITION.

"The Stage not only refines the manners, but it is also the best teacher of morals;—for it is the truest and most intelligible picture of human life; it shews not merely the outward man, but the inward workings of the mind and presents to the observer a Panoramic view at once of men and things." J.

NEW DRURY LANE THEATRE.

Journal of Performances, with Remarks.

January 26. Richard 3rd—Harlequin and Flying Chest.
27.—Kenilworth—Ibid.
28.—Hypocrite—Old and Young—Ibid.
29.—Philandering—Pantomime.
30.—Selection of Music.
31.—Merchant of Venice—Pantomime.
Feb. 2.—Macbeth—Giovanni in London.

We never recollect seeing the tragedy so well performed as it was this evening. The murderous *Thane* was person-

ated with more judgment and characteristic energy by Mr. KEAN, than by any predecessor excepting GARRICK. His dagger scene, his description of the slaughter of *Duncan*, and subsequent resolve to brave it out sword in hand, were full of that fire and self-command, which, only an actor of real genius can feel or display; and his combat with *Macduff* was admirably sustained. Mrs. BUNN entered into the part of *Lady Macbeth* with great success. Her sleep walking scene has been seldom surpassed. Mr. WALLACK evinced a just and strong conception of the character of *Macduff*, and in many instances, especially in the scene in which he learns the fate of his wife and children, he rose to great excellence, and in the combat vied both with the spirit and the address of his skilful antagonist. We never indeed saw a contest with the sword better managed. This tragedy is one of those half-a-dozen pieces of SHAKSPEARE which stands out before the rest, and would alone, perhaps, have been sufficient to immortalize his name. The fervour of his imagination, and the luminousness of his discernment are nowhere more strikingly displayed; nor, while the flashes of his everready and inexhaustible conception are freely indulged, does he in a single scene fail to support himself to its climax, or to render that climax worthy of his almost supernatural force and vividity. The tragedy of *Macbeth*, as now represented, may be termed a serious operatic masque. The music by the combined contrivance of SHADWELL and D'AVENANT, was so liberally introduced, as to make the piece largely partake of the general character of the dramas brought forward in their time; and this fact brings us to the consideration of LOCK'S compositions, as applied to the illustration of the characters of *Hecate* and the *Wierd Sisters*. The wild rudeness that has always been so justly admired in the music of *Macbeth* was composed under the influence of two great examples, LULLY and CAMBERT, the first of whom was the favourite musician of the French Court, and the second organist of the Church of St. Honoré. Both of them were distinguished masters of the *canto figurato*, and so admired by CHARLES II, that LOCK, to secure his Majesty's patronage, was careful to make them his models, and so sedulous and ingenious as to succeed in his attempt. He, much

about the same time, soon after CHARLES's restoration, in the celebration of which his talents were engaged, produced the music of two other pieces—the *Tempest* of SHAKSPEARE, and an Opera, or Masque, called *Psyche*, in which strains of much the same cast are employed—strains which, in fact, though they now seem wild and savage, were at that period very differently considered. Like the dramas they accompany and enrich, they partake of the character of the age; and again, like those dramas, wear, in our estimation, an aspect deriving some of its influence over us from their inherent excellence, and part from our veneration of whatever is in a degree antique, and known to have been admired by our forefathers. Independently, however, of any indulgence shewn to the music of MATTHEW LOCK, on account of its antiquity, its claims to our estimation are very considerable. Its style, after every allowance is made for what may be called the *fashion* of the dramatic music of his day, is very original. It most felicitously depicts the nature of the characters to whom its performance is allotted. The points and responses are ably given and arranged; and while the melody is peculiarly appropriate, and the harmony judiciously consolidated, the parts are disposed with all the skill and address of which the ablest theorists of the time were masters. The performance of this music last night was in the best style. GEORGE SMITH's fine bass voice was never heard to greater advantage than in the passages given to *Hecate;* and Mr. HORN, Misses CUBITT, and POVEY, were equally happy in the parts assigned them. *Macbeth* was succeeded by *Giovanni*, in which Madame VESTRIS and HARLEY exerted their talents with their usual success and afforded all that satisfaction which they so well know how to ensure.

3.—Kenilworth—Actress of All-Work—Cataract.

4.—Hypocrite—Old and Young—Pantomime.

5.—Philandering—Pantomime.

6. A new Way to Pay Old Debts—Spoiled Child—Giovanni.

This fine play of MASSINGER's was brought out in full strength this evening for the first time this season, and the curtain rose to a most crowded and fashionable house.

MASSINGER was one of the great band of dramatists, who

with BEN JONSON, FORD, SHIRLEY, DECKER and others, followed on the the immortal SHAKSPEARE, and poured the brilliancy of day around the comparative darkness of that period of our history. The sun of SHAKSPEARE rose on that age without one intervening ray of twilight to obscure its brightness, and has continued through successive ages to reign unrivalled lord of the ascendant. In energy and originality, MASSINGER approaches perhaps, more nearly to the great Bard than any other writer. He has not the tenderness of FORD nor the passages of uncommon beauty that prevail through the writings of BEAUMONT and FLETCHER; but his style is marked by all that vigour and strength of conception and expression that distinguished this romantic age of hazardous daring. All the drama's of this period are interspersed with passages of pruriency and grossness; but they are like the weeds that shoot up beneath a burning sun on the rich Indian soil, amid a thousand flowers and shrubs, and take little from the merit of these great productions. Three of MASSINGER's dramas have lately held possesion of the stage, and have been distinguished by the splendid efforts of the great actor who now stands unrivalled in this Country. *The Duke of Milan; Riches;* and the fine play under consideration, have successively been revived with all the powers of Mr. KEAN. Nothing could be finer than his performance on this evening. It was perhaps the most perfect and impressive effort of histrionic genius ever witnessed. His energy in some scenes was overpoweringly terrific; his eye his action, his voice, produced an effect we have not words to describe. His early scenes with *Marrall*, and the developement of his plans of family aggrandizement were finely given. His interview with his daughter and the way in which he unmasked his designs and poured the leprous distilment of his villany into her ears were finely given. The last scene of disappointment of all his views, when he finds his deed a blank, and then attempts to wheedle *Marrall*, and the subsequent discovery of his daughters marriage with *Allworth* was the finest acting we ever witnessed. His sudden exclamation and the look that accompanied his denunciation of vengeance were terrific.

" Village nurses
Revenge their wrongs with curses;
A syllable I'll not waste, but thus I take the life
Which, wretch, I gave thee".

Mr. KEAN's whole performance of this arduous character would give immortality to any actor; it was enthusiastically received by the audience. Mr. OXBERRY made his appearance in his old character of *Justice Greedy*, after a long absence from these boards; and was exceedingly well received. DOWTON's *Marrall*, was also admirably played.

7.—Guy Mannering—Cataract.

9.—Macbeth—Giovanni in London.

10.—Road to ruin—Cataract.

11.—Hypocrite—Lodoiska, [revived].

A numerous audience was attracted this evening by the revival of this musical drama, aided by those magnanimous performers, the Horses. The interest of this piece however, is too meagre, and the dialogue in general too solemn, and monotonous, to draw forth any feeling but a soporific one. It requires, indeed, every adventitious aid to make it at all passable, and although it received that support it was very ponderous. If it had not been for HARLEY's vivacity of *tone* and manner, the clattering hoofs of the horses and finally the active warfare between Poles and Tartars we really should have fallen fast asleep. As we have no wish to leave the same deadening impression on our readers, we trust we shall stand excused for not entering further into its merits.

12.—Philandering—Ibid.

13.—A new Way to pay Old Debts—Spoiled Child—Giovanni.

14.—Beggar's Opera—Old and Young—Lodoiska.

Artaxerxes had been advertized, but Mr. BRAHAM's indisposition prevented its performance.

16.—Richard 3rd—Lodoiska.

17.—Lodoiska—Simpson and Co.—Cataract.

18.—Hypocrite—Halt of Caravan—Spoiled Child.

19.—A new Way to Pay Old Debts—Lodoiska.

20.—Merry Wives of Windsor—Monsieur Tonson.

This excellent comedy was revived with great taste and splendour: and from the numerous musical additions which

were judiciously bestowed on it, selected from SHAKSPEARE'S poems and plays, and the strength with which it was cast, its performance received very high approbation.—It is well known that SHAKSPEARE forced his "fat hero" into love at the command of Queen Elizabeth, who certainly displayed a greater liking for the humour of the Knight, than sympathy with the tender passion. SHAKSPEARE had more taste than her Majesty. He knew that "*Falstaff* could not be in love without ceasing to be *Falstaff*;" and he sketched the character as one in which avarice was the leading passion; but into the composition of which love could never enter. His genius was fettered; and he commenced his work, as it were, with a rule and compass: therefore, the *Falstaff* of the *Merry Wives of Windsor* is not the merry, laughter-loving Knight of *Henry IV*. The outlines are the same, but the filling up of the picture is very different. However, there is much in the character to amuse, and a considerable portion of the drama, not only of the incidents but of the dialogue, depends on the effective acting of the representative of the old fat man. For this reason the play has been seldom acted, because it is difficult to procure an actor capable of sustaining the arduous part. Mr. DOWTON sustained it last night; and, we think, disappointed the audience, or, at least, those who had formed an idea of the character from that which SHAKSPEARE drew. Mr. DOWTON, however, conceived the part well, but his powers are certainly unequal to the task allotted him. In one or two scenes he was excellent, particularly in the interview between him and *Ford*, under the name of *Brook*; but even here, his acting was unnatural. When he tells the disguised *Ford*, how he will behave towards him should they meet; he stares at him, and lays his stick upon his forehead precisely as he would have done had he known who was before him.

Mr. WALLACK was excellent as the jealous *Ford*; and Mr. PENLEY sustained very ably the part of *Page*. Mr. HARLEY'S personification of the simple *Slender* was an exquisite piece of acting, and the character lost nothing of its original perfection. Mr. OXBERRY was also highly humourous as *Justice Shallow*.

The female parts were ably sustained by Miss POVEY, as *Anne Page*; Miss STEPHENS, as *Mrs Ford*; Miss CUBITT, as *Mrs Page*; and Mrs HARLOWE, as *Mrs. Quickly*. The latter lady whined a little more than was necessary even for the wheedling dame. The chief attraction, however, was the singing. Several of the most beautiful of SHAKESPEARE'S lyric pieces had been selected for the occasion the music to which had been composed and adapted by Mr. HORN and Mr. PARRY. Mr BRAHAM, who sustained the part of the successful lover of "sweet *Anne Page*," sang in a delightful style the stanzas from *Love's Labour lost*, *A lover's eyes will strike an eagle blind:* the lines from *As you like it*, *Blow, blow, thou wintry wind:* and a beautiful ballad supposed to have been written by MARLOWE. In the latter he was enthusiastically and deservedly *encored*, Miss STEVENS gave most exquisitely the words from SHAKSPEARE'S *Passionate Pilgrim* and *Crabbed Age and Youth*, and a sweet passage from one of the Bard's sonnets; as did Miss CUBITT the song from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—*When it is the time of night.*—Monsieur Tonson closed the evenings entertainments much to the satisfaction of a crowded house.

21—Ibid—Lodoiska.

23—Hamlet—Cataract.

COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.

Journal of Performances, with Remarks.

January 26.—King Lear—Harlequin and Poor Robin.

We have often borne testimony to the undoubted merit of Mr. YOUNG in those characters, which require bold and energetic action, and which afford opportunities for the display of that gorgeous flow of action, and fine declamatory style in which he stands second to no performer. The character of *Lear*, which he personated this evening, is not cast in a mould exactly calculated for the felicitous developement of these qualities; and although the *Lear* of Mr. YOUNG, cannot be considered as a failure, yet it was not

that peculiarly marked and effective portraiture of the unfortunate monarch, which the reader pictures to himself, from a perusal of the play. In our opinion the deficiency of Mr. Y. consisted in a total absence of passion, in a too great indulgence of declamation, where declamation was rapid and ineffective, and in an endeavour rather to adapt the character to his peculiarities, than in the more appropriate one of adapting his qualifications to the part he had undertaken to personate. However, with the exception of KEAN, "who is not any thing if not *passionate*," there is no actor who could at all sustain so arduous and difficult a character. Mr. Y. may therefore perform it from the necessity of having such a play acted, but we have too good an opinion of his taste, and consciousness of his own powers, to suppose that he would select it of his own choice. The *Edgar* of KEMBLE, was an animated and effective piece of acting. Miss LACY'S *Cordelia*, deserves no favour, and we are unwilling to say any thing unkindly. The part, is certainly not a very popular one, nor likely in any hands to produce much effect. The play is too well known to need much criticism, but we cannot conclude this notice without expressing a wish, that we may not see it again at this house, in the hands of the same performers, unless the public be tired of every thing else; or a "special request," or some other such *urgent call* impose upon the proprietors the necessity of producing it.

27.—Much Ado about Nothing—Ibid.

28.—Man of the World—Ibid.

29.—Cabinet—Ibid.

30.—No Performance.

31.—Timour the Tartar—Simpson & Co.—Pantomime.

Feb. 2.—King Lear.—Pantomime.

3.—John Bull—Ibid.

4.—Man of the World—Ibid.

5.—Cabinet—Ibid.

6.—Clari—*The* POACHERS, [1st time]—Ibid.

The plot of this farce, as far as we could understand it, turns upon the adventures of a young lady of rank, sister to a German Count (to whom, however, she does not seem very well known), who having become enamoured of a gentleman dwelling in the family of her brother as an

equerry, hits upon the following *obvious* method of getting introduced to, and learning something further of, the object of her attachment:—A peasant upon the Count's estate having been convicted of the crime of poaching, incurs the consequent penalties; and our heroine, presenting herself to the culprit, disguised as a man, proposes to intercede for him with the Count, in the assumed character of *Grisette*, his wife. The peasant accedes, and accompanies the transformed lady to the palace, where a series of *equivoques* take place, some of which, though not very ingenious in their nature, told well enough, from the circumstance of the lady's double disguise. The Count and his Equerry both fall desperately in love with the beautiful and elegant *Grisette*, the latter, indeed, conceiving a serious and eternal attachment for her in the amazingly short space of a few minutes. He even proposes to the poacher to purchase his wife of him; and to this the other agrees, thinking the *lady* a *gentleman*, and that the equerry would be marvellously well gulled. An *eclaircissement* ensues; and the Equerry, who turns out somehow or other to be himself a "Baron bold," obtains the hand of the young Countess, as well as pardon for the poacher.

We are aware, that it is too much to expect the motives, which influence ordinary men to operate upon the *dramatis personæ* of a farce; still some portion of verisimilitude ought to be maintained, and utter absurdity cannot fail to offend. Were we to be guided by the applause, which with one or two exceptions was lavishly bestowed on this piece, we should be compelled to speak of its merits highly. Preferring, however, the exercise of our own judgment, we are bound to say that it appears to be quite destitute of that degree of talent necessary to rescue it from the ignoble fate of being ultimately *shelfed*. It is too much sprinkled with gross *double entendres*, ever to be a favourite, except with the low visitants of the upper galleries. The author is solely indebted to the exertions of the actors. COOPER, who is a very pleasant comic performer, was lively and active in the *Count*, and BLANCHARD and JONES topped their respective parts of the *Poacher* and *Equerry*. MRS. CHATTERLEY too, in the character of the *alias*—loving *Countess*,

was interesting, graceful, and dignified, and excited our warm approbation.

7.—Timour the Tartar—Ibid—Ibid.

9.—Cortez—Ibid—Ibid.

10.—NATIVE LAND, *or the Return from Slavery*, [1st time]—Poachers.

A new opera under the above title from the pen of Mr. DIMOND, the successful author of the "*Foundling of the Forest*" and several other pieces, was this evening produced with complete success. The scene is laid in Genoa, and though the incidents are few, yet they are well imagined, and the story taken in the aggregate, is not of the uninteresting nature, the plots of operas usually are: in the scenes separately considered, there is a great deal of really dramatic and truly effective merit, so much so, that even had it not had the aid of some very charming music and singing, we think it would have stood a very good chance of success, but when the matchless strains of ROSSINI and BISHOP, aided by the vocal powers of SINCLAIR, DURUSET, Miss PATON, Miss TREE, and Miss LOVE, and the admirable acting of FARREN, COOPER, FAWCETT, &c.—it could not fail of meeting the favour it received and enjoying a long and brilliant career.

A war has been for sometime carried on between the Genoese and Turks, in consequence of which, single ladies and wives are necessitated to separate for a time from the presence of their lovers and husbands. Hostilities are at length carried by the Genoese into the Turkish territories, and ultimately prove in favour of the former, but a part of the Christian army is captured and enslaved by the followers of the prophet. The principal of these are afterwards released and return to their native land in safety. Among them are *Aurelio di Montalto*, a noble Genoese [SINCLAIR,] *Peregrino* his valet [FAWCETT,] and *Marcillo* [DURUSET]. Between *Aurelio* and *Clymante*, [Miss PATON]; an attachment formerly subsisted; and of this attachment the author makes an interesting use, by creating in the mind of *Aurelio*, an ill-grounded jealousy of *Celio* [Miss TREE,] who in the end is discovered to be *Rionding*, a woman; and he also turns to very good account, the return of *Peregrino*, the husband of *Zanina* [Miss LOVE,] who after

yielding to the flirtation of *Biondina*, as a man, and learning that *Peregrino*, is so seriously wounded, as to have become only the remnant of a husband, is not a little chagrined at his appearance, and is very slowly reconciled to his return. A considerable deal of pathos is extracted from the situations in which *Aurelio* and *Clymante* are thrown, and a good deal of wit and humour (although perhaps not of the newest kind) is drawn from the character of *Zanina*, who is a lively copy of the numerous waiting women, by whom she has long since been preceded.

It is almost needless to say, that after a variety of incidents suitable to the several characters, and natural to the occasions out of which they are made to grow, the jealousy of *Aurelio* is pardoned, and a union follows between him and *Clymante*, while *Zanina*, on finding that *Peregrino's* wounds and mutilations have been feigned, by way of trying her sincerity and constancy, feels the renewal of all her past affection, forgets the attractions of *Cælio*, and rushes into his arms. On these events the opera of *Native Land* is founded.

We have not space to go farther into a detail—the music is generally the principal attraction of these productions, and the lovers of that delightful science, experienced a gorgeous treat. Many of the airs are of the first rate description, both in point of melody and character. The accompaniments are arranged with consummate skill, and in all instances are productive of the effect intended. The selections from ROSSINI are judicious: their execution by SINCLAIR and Miss PATON (to whom they were exclusively assigned) tasteful and expressive. The opening chorus of citizens on the shores of Genoa, at the return of their friends from slavery is spirited and exulting. The duo between *Cælio* and *Zanina* in the second act, is both lively and pretty, and conveys the sentiment of the poetry with a force as indicative of talent, as its truth is declaratory of judgment. Miss TREE gave the air, *Is't art, I pray, or nature?* with great freedom and simplicity, and was deservedly encored. FAWCETT sang, *Oh brave rub-a-dub!* with all his accustomed humour and spirit. Miss PATON delivered *Julio told me when we parted*, in her sweetest style, and accompanied herself on the harp in a manner that evin-

ced her proficiency as a practitioner on that instrument. The castanet dance, with which the first act closed, was performed with agility, grace, and elegance, and its repetition vehemently demanded. The ballad, *Yon blue, beauteous sky is with tears sparkling o'er*, called forth SINCLAIR'S best powers; its performance was chaste, impressive and sweet, and the Romance by the same, possesses some very elegant turns of thought and was deliciously given. The bravura, *Hail, joyous day*, from ROSSINI was executed with striking spirit, and almost wonderful flexibility, by Miss PATON; and Miss TREE threw great beauty of style and tone into *There's an Isle clasped by waves*. Indeed, to notice according to their merits the various detached beautiful pieces, which are plentifully interspersed throughout the whole, would fill several pages, we can only therefore conclude, by bestowing our hearty approbation on all concerned in the opera, and by observing that it well deserves the high success it met with. Several delightful views of Genoa and its environs, from the pencil of the GRIEVES's, added greatly to the general effect.

11.—Ibid.—Pantomime.

12.—Ibid.—Poachers.

13.—John Bull—Pantomime.

14.—Native Land—Poachers.

16.—Romeo and Juliet—Pantomime.

Miss F. H. KELLY played *Juliet* with all that grace and feeling which have hitherto characterized her delineation of this favourite of SHAKSPEARE'S. Miss K. was warmly greeted by the house on her *entrée*, and throughout the performance received that liberal and encouraging support she so highly deserves.

17.—Native Land—Poachers.

18.—Ibid.—Pantomime.

19.—Ibid.—Poachers.

20.—Much ado about Nothing—Irish Tudor—Pantomime.

21.—Native Land—Poachers.

23.—Hamlet—Pantomime.

24.—Native Land—Poachers.

MINOR DRAMA.

SURREY THEATRE.

February 16.—ASLAN the LION, *or the Seven Brazen Towers of Tepelini.* This is another of Mr. BARRYMORE'S anomalous productions, and appears to be principally founded on the melo drama of *Timour the Tartar;* and has plenty of food for those whose ravenous appetites can only be filled with trumpets, explosions, conflagrations, thunder and blunderbusses. It has often occurred to us, that the proprietors of the minor Theatres would do themselves much more good, if, instead of resorting to these ridiculous pieces of bombast and fustian, and spending large sums in their production, they would turn their attention (as Mr. DIBDIN the late proprietor of this theatre did, on several occasions) to the many rejected and unacted Tragedies and Plays, which have of late issued from the press, many of which we have no doubt, contain sufficient intrinsic merit to attract and interest an audience. In the case of *Fazio*, and some others, Mr. DIBDIN exposed to the world beauties, which would otherwise perhaps have lain dormant, and if the plan we mention were adopted many more would be discovered, in which genius would be found, and consequently rescued from that oblivion which the rejection of managers has inevitably doomed it to. Among those we would recommend for representation (of course with curtailments) are: *Fredolfo*, by MATURIN; a finer tragedy than which the present stage cannot boast. *Montalto*;—*Count Arezzi*, by HAINES;—*Fulvius Valens*; *Lorenzo*: and many others. These we are certain, would, (if produced with the splendor which is bestowed on Messrs. BARRYMORE'S, MILNER'S and KER'S melo dramas) prove more successful and more advantageous to the managers, than any thing they can bring forward from the pens of those gentlemen.—We advise them to think seriously of this.

The plot of *Aslan* is of the most meagre description, and is really not worth relating.—*Aslan the Lion*, [H. KEMBLE] returning triumphant from battle, determines on reward-

ing his two principal chiefs, *Delvino* [ROWBOTHAM], and *Mouctar*, [AULD] for their brave and meritorious conduct during the war, with the hand of the fair *Princess Mezona*, with whom, both are desperately smitten. The conqueror in a trial of skill is to receive the prize. A furious combat ensues, in which *Delvino* is worsted;—who in the impulse of disappointed love attempts the life of *Mouctar*, and is consequently driven from the presence of *Aslan* with every mark of ignominy. In revenge, he traitorously enters into a compact with *Gardiki*, [GALLOT] a neighbouring prince, and *Aslan's* direst foe, and by his instrumentality, *Aslan*, his intended bride *Erminah*, [Miss KEMBELL], and the *Princess Mizona*, are betrayed into the hands of their enemy and closely imprisoned. *Delvino*, however, repents him of his treachery, and becomes instrumental in their release, destroys *Gardeki*, preserves the life of *Mizona*, whose hand he joins in that of *Mouctar*, dies in her arms, and the seven towers of Tepelini are razed to the ground.

The acting displayed in this poor production was of the very best kind, and far surpassed what we have been accustomed to see on the minor stage for some time. KEMBLE and ROWBOTHAM were indeed excellent, the latter in particular; his dying scene called forth long and loud approbation. Mrs. W. CLIFFORD as the mother of *Aslan*, performed with much power and majesty, Miss TUNSTALL sung some very pretty ditties and, HERRING made a very meagre part highly entertaining. The scenery by TOMKINS was magnificent in the extreme. Particularly the *seven Brazen Towers, the Halls of Aslan, and a distant view of Tepelini*. A gorgeous procession with military band was much relished. The piece was well received by a most crowded house.

COBURG THEATRE.

Several excellent pieces have been produced at this theatre during the past month, founded on some glorious points of history, called "*Alfred* the *Great*," and "*Britons in the East* or the *Siege of Acre*", from the pen of Mr. MILNER.——We shall endeavour to report in our next.

The house has been crowded to the ceiling every evening of performance.

ROYALTY THEATRE.

February 9th. The CHIEFTAIN'S BANQUET or the *Poisoned Cup*. A new melo drama invented and written by Mr. GOFF, under this title, was acted this evening for the first time. The author of it has before shewn his talents for this kind of composition, and the present production is highly creditable to them, and the success it has met with is no more than its merits and performance deserve. The scene is laid in Northumberland or to speak more melo dramatically Northumbria, though at what precise period of our history we cannot determine, and therefore we can only say, in the words of one of our greatest living geniuses

"Such acts to chronicles we yield"
Go seek them there and see".

In the first scene we are introduced to *Murchardus*, a powerful earl and *Maurice* his friend, who, under the assumed title of *Count Maurice* is the Bandit *Rufus*. *Murchardus*, it appears from the colloquy which ensues, has, before the rising of the curtain, caused his brother *Sir Bertram* to be assassinated, and his disconsolate widow to be confined in one of the dungeons of his castle. But his character for villainy is not yet fully shewn. Having been rejected by *Morna* the sister of *Lord Roderick* to whom he had offered his hand, he determines on seizing not only the lady herself, but her brother's possessions. It is concerted between him and *Maurice*, who leads the ambitious, but wavering and irresolute, earl into crimes and assists him in committing them, that *Lord Roderick* shall be invited to the castle, where a banquet is to be given, and a *poisoned cup* presented to the unsuspecting guest. *Morna*, and *Reginald de Courcy*, to whom she is betrothed are also in the note of expectation, and *Murchardus*, under the specious pretence of hospitality and friendship, thus lays a plot for securing the spacious domains of *Roderick* and the persons of his sister and her lover. We are then led into the gloomy dungeon

where *Lady Bertha*, the relict of *Sir Bertram* is imprisoned. Here we become acquainted with *Walter*, who has been in some way accessary to the murder of the latter, but is seized with compassion for *Bertha's* condition and determines on relieving it. *Murchardus* gives orders for her being put to death, and *Maurice* makes an infamous proposal to her as the only way by which her life can be saved, and which she indignantly refuses to accede to. The bell tolls one, the assassins enter, and are on the point of putting their designs into execution, when *Walter* who has overheard the directions given to them by *Maurice*, and learns their signal, opportunely arrives and saves the lady by killing the murderers. She flies with him to the castle of *Roderick*, who has accepted the invitation of *Murchardus* to the banquet, which, however, *Morna* and *Reginald* decline, *Walter* has some suspicions of *Murchardus's* designs and communicates them to *Reginald*, who resolves upon attending the feast in disguise with his retainers, and *Lady Bertha* hazards herself in the castle she has just escaped from, for the purpose of making her appearance as the *ghost of herself* to *Murchardus*. The impression which this living apparition makes on *Murchardus*, is, as our readers will suppose, more easily imagined than described. *Reginald* accompanied by *Hildebrand*, his esquire, visits *Murchardus's* castle in the disguise of an unknown knight, and according to the polite and courteous manners of the times, is very hospitably received. During the entertainments he remains with his vizor closed and preserves a most mysterious silence, his squire assigning as a reason for this behaviour, that his master is bound upon a pilgrimage to the shrine of that "holy blissful martyr", THOMAS a BECKET, and has sworn not to speak till he has offered up his prayers to that very turbulent and ambitious saint. *Maurice* fills a goblet with wine and gives it to *Walter*, who is appointed cup-bearer for the occasion, to present to *Lord Roderick*. By a dexterous slight of hand, *Walter* contrives to change the cup for that of *Maurice*, who lifts the ingredients of the poisoned chalice to his own lips and drinks the deadly draught which he intended for *Roderick*. The poison begins to operate immediately it is taken, and in a fit of rage and agony, the villain *Maurice* expires. The stranger knight now discovers

himself to be *Reginald*, and accuses *Murchardus* with the intended crime, who plunges a dagger into his own bosom, and thus the play concludes. There is a very laughable and amusing underplot, which, although it has but little connexion with the more serious parts of the piece, does not destroy their interest, but considerably enlivens them. The acting of Mr. GOFF in the principal character *Maurice*, was admirable. The success of this play depended a great deal on his own exertions, and they alone would have ensured it. Mr. ANDERTON performed the part of *Murchardus*, but we cannot allow him a very great tribute of applause. He was always too tame, or else too gesticular and vociferous. We would advise this gentleman to read *Hamlet's* directions to the players, for "it offends us to the soul, to see a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, &c." *Lady Bertha* had an excellent representative in Mrs. AINSLIE. Mrs. COMERSAL imparted a great deal of spirit and vivacity to the part of *Maud*, a chambermaid of the middle ages. An amorous old housekeeper was very well acted by Miss HOLLAND. We must particularly notice the admirable performance of Messrs. WYATT and BEVERLY in the laughable parts of *Wittekind* (who is described in the bills as "half-rogue, half-fool, half-man, and half-monkey") and *Fitzhugh*, warder of *Roderick's* castle "a sort of waste-butt, a walking *dépôt* of spirituous liquors, in continual dread of a coroner's inquest being held upon him, or a verdict of "died by excessive drinking." Those two gentlemen had an excellent opportunity for the display of their comic talents in these droll and humourous characters, and never availed themselves of it to greater advantage. Mr. HILL was extremely diverting as *Edwy*, a retainer of *Roderick's* and in love with *Maud*, and Mr. SALTER was spirited in enacting *Walter*. Messrs. MOORE and WATKINS, as *Roderick* and *Reginald*, and the rest of the company gave universal satisfaction to the audience. The scenery was well painted, particularly "*The Grand Hall of Banquet*," by Mr. THISELTON.

WEST LONDON THEATRE.

The play of the *Mountaineers* has been performed at this Theatre, which has lately undergone a thorough repair, been new beautified, decorated, and much improved. The decorations resemble those of the English Opera House, and the arrangements of the private boxes are in many respects similar to those of the Italian Opera House. These alterations have been done for the performance of French plays, the season for which commenced last month. This species of foreign entertainment was very successful at this theatre last season. The play of the *Mountaineers* was respectably got up, with appropriate dresses and decorations, and many of the characters well sustained, particularly *Octavian*, by a young gentleman of the name of PERKINS, from PENLEY'S company at Boulogne, and who it is said, is shortly to make his appearance at Drury-lane. He is only twenty years of age, and sustained that arduous character throughout with the most promising talents for such a line of acting; his discovery of *Floranthe*, and his fall in the frantic scene were very effective; the fall was managed, perhaps, as well as the most experienced tragedian.

The Theatre of Parma, is so constructed, that a piece of paper torn at the very back of the stage is heard all over the house.

At the Theatre of San Carlo, in Naples, a squadron of 48 horses manœuvred with the greatest ease upon the stage, in DUPORT'S ballet of *Cinderella*. They were rode by Germans, and charged at full speed.

The Lord Chamberlain has appointed GEORGE COLMAN, Esq. Licenser and Reader of Plays, in the room of the late Mr. LARPENT. This appointment is a mark of honour due to the talents and genius of Mr. COLMAN.

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THE DRAMA.

SUPPLEMENT TO VOL. V.

MR. ELLISTON.

[*Resumed from page* 326.]

In the year 1809, Mr. ELLISTON became proprietor of the Royal Circus. The destruction of Drury-lane Theatre by fire in that year, deprived all the actors of employment, and while the major part commenced a series of performances at the King's Theatre, and the Lyceum, as a joint stock company, several of the most eminent of them, preferred trusting to their individual exertions, to compensate themselves for the losses they had sustained by the conflagration. Amongst these was our hero, who engaged the Circus for a term of years, and immediately took the steps necessary for commencing the season with spirit. The house opened under his management on Easter Monday the 3*rd* of April with the customary description of entertainments; but not proving so profitable a speculation as he had anticipated, he resolved upon trying what effect his own appearance would have. As a preparatory measure the following letter was circulated amongst his friends, and was afterwards published in the newspapers.

"Mr. ELLISTON has announced his intention to appear in "*The Beggars Opera*" at the Royal Circus, on Thursday next 15th of June."

"He finds, that some of his friends have expressed regret that he should take any personal share in the performances at this theatre. He is aware of the kindness of the motives which have led to this sensation; and, although he cannot admit such regret to be well founded, he is not the

less pleased, or grateful, that there should be persons who feel so lively a solicitude for his character and welfare.

"To lessen the uneasiness of such friends, he thinks it his duty to trouble them with a few words in explanation, by which he hopes he may satisfy them that he should not so well deserve their regards, had he pursued any course but that which he has taken."

"In the first place, he has reason to believe, that some of his friends, not having been accustomed to visit the Royal Circus, are unacquainted with the extent and excellence of the building as a Theatre; and are under a mistaken impression therefore, as to the respectability of effect, which may be given to any performance on its stage, properly appointed and conducted.

"Secondly, he believes that an equal degree of misapprehension exists, as to the powers of the company with whom he is proposing to act.

"In both these particulars, he is persuaded that his friends, on inspection, will find themselves very pleasantly disappointed.

"But the main objection he imagines, is, as to the supposed derogation to which he may subject himself, by going a little out of the routine of his profession, in appearing at a Theatre, not commonly deemed a regular Theatre.

"To this Mr. ELLISTON begs leave to answer, that, by exertion, and perhaps, by good fortune, he has the happiness to find himself in a situation which does not require that he should stand on more punctilios than are necessary; that, in order to relieve himself from the incessant labours of such performances as he has been accustomed to in London, and in the Country, at all times, in all seasons, and under all circumstances, for many years past, he has thought it prudent to devote part of his property to a concern, which, if well cultivated, may furnish an adequate substitution to himself, and to his large and increasing family, for the advantages he must perhaps surrender by pursuing a life of somewhat less fatigue and exhaustion, and by limiting his performances at the winter theatres to an extent more consistent, probably, with his real interests and reputation.

"His first object in the promotion of this concern, has been, to give it all the respectability in his power: and more respectability, if it be possible, than has been possessed by that, or by any similar place of amusement. With this view, he has already employed considerable sums in the production of pieces of merit, established by every aid that ingenuity and a reasonable degree of personal talent could afford. The return has been promising: but, much remains to be done; and if, by lending any little influence which may attach itself to his personal appearance, an addition of consequence may be made both to the character and profit of his undertaking, he hopes that his friends will think, that he has, at least, a sufficient stock of credit as a public performer, to put a small part of it to adventure, in the way of speculation, when that speculation, by due management and support, may in the end requite him so handsomely, not to say so very largely.

"Mr. ELLISTON would certainly not have lent himself in this way to the scheme of any other individual; but in his own house, and uncontrolled by the authority of any judgment but his own, he may surely take liberties with himself, with an impunity he could not reckon upon elsewhere. He proposes by a previous address, which his friends will probably see in the papers, to prepare the public mind for his appearance in so new a shape. In short, he has no doubt, and he trusts his friends, on consideration, will have no doubt, that he may for a short time amuse himself by riding on the outside of the coach, (for so this Stage may perhaps be deemed as to his profession) without in the slightest degree relinquishing his claim to his place within".

Stratford Place, June 17th, 1809.

[Having thus prepared the minds of his friends, on the 15th June, he made his appearance as *Macheath*, previously speaking the following

ADDRESS.

"Each anxious host, of ardent zeal possest,
His friends to please, and gratify each guest,
Urges endeavour, thinks no effort vain,
That tends to please, or leads to entertain;
Yet sometimes finds too eager to succeed,

The will, alas! has far outstripp'd the deed!
His fate may, here, be mine: for never host
More ardent zeal, nor eager will, could boast;
Ne'er welcom'd guests more warmly to his dome,
Nor friends to gratify, felt more at home!
At home, then, view me, where unaw'd by rule,
The gravest sometimes dare to play the fool;
To cheer the heart, make every plan their choice,
And e'en turn singers, *unpossess'd of voice:*
That thought has nearly stopp'd my scanty breath,
While, flitting past, appears to frown *Macheath*;
Minims and Crotchets seem to weep and wail,
And like *King Richard's* ghosts my ears assail;
Richard, who here might bawl in tragic strain,
'A horse: a horse!' *nor bawl for one in vain*!
While the poor *Captain's* strains, less prized by half,
Perchance may only raise a loud *horse-laugh*!
[*Bell rings.*]
But to my trial called, for weal, or woe,
'The Judges all' arranged—' a fearful show!'
I go, undaunted; sure of kind support;
And throw myself thus boldy on the court;
The very summit of my accusation,
A mere attempt to *steal* your approbation!
But then, like all *Macheath's*, I feel a hope,
You'll ask from me, *no feats upon the Rope*;
But, mingling mercy with dramatic laws,
Assuage my doom,—*transport* me with applause!"

Mr ELLISTON was so well received in this character, that he quickly followed it with the "*Duke Aranza*," "*Macbeth*", "*Archer*," the "*Three Singles*", and various other performances, and he drew such overflowing houses, that in 1810 he abolished the *ride*, and filled its place with benches, at the same time styling the house the SURREY THEATRE. He continued to perform here occasionally, till the year 1814, when he quitted the concern.

On the opening of Drury Lane in 1812, he formed one of the company, and was selected to deliver Lord BYRON's opening address. He also played "*Hamlet*" on the same evening. After a season or two he quitted the company, and

since which period until the winter of 1819, his great talents were almost completely lost to the London Stage, (with the exception of his performances at the Olympic Theatre, for which house, he had given the late Mr. ASTLEY a considerable sum). The circumstances connected with his recent hire of Drury Lane Theatre cannot but be fresh in the recollection of our readers; and as his operations have hitherto been conducted with the utmost liberality and taste, we have no doubt but that a long career of honour and prosperity awaits him. In the full enjoyment of these honours we must now leave him.

THOUGHTS

ON THE HISTORY, AND REVIVED DRAMA OF "KING JOHN."

The commonly received story of the poisoning of this monarch, detailed by several writers, and adopted by SHAKSPEARE, has by late authors been very much doubted. RAPIN speaks of it as very improbable, since it is not mentioned by contemporary historians; to which his learned annotator (presumed to be Mr. MORANT) adds, "that the poison is not noticed by any historian that lived within 60 years of the time," or before 1276.

"Suppose," observes Dr. PEGGE, in his ingenious discussion of this historical fact, "the King to be at Lynn, in Norfolk, on the 11th Oct. 1216—17, and to have it in his intention to remove thence to Lincoln, or Lindsey; after which the narrative of the attack and progress of his last illness is briefly this:—In his road from Lynn, it was necessary for the King to cross the *Washes*, as they are called, which part the two counties of Norfolk and Lincoln, and which lie between a place, called the *Cross Keys*, in Norfolk, and *Fosdike*, at Holland, in Lincolnshire; and there he very narrowly escaped drowning with his whole army; for before he was quite got over, the tide coming up the river Wellstream, which overflows the marshes at high water, put him in great danger, and though he escaped himself, he could not save his baggage, which was all

swallowed up and lost. He arrived that night at Swinshed Abbey, Oct. 14, where he lodged and began to be ill, or as is pretended, was poisoned. However, he set out thence next morning on horse-back to Sleford, but was forced to betake himself to a litter. At Sleford he was severely handled by a dysentery, and next day was carried to Newark Castle, where he died (as all the most ancient authors agree) a few days after; his bowels were buried at Croxton in Leicestershire, and his body at Worcester."

MATHEW PARIS, a nearly contemporary historian, states grief and anxiety to have been the source of the king's malady, and to have thrown him into a fever; which he says was afterwards encreased by the patient's own imprudence. RICHARD DE MORINS, author of the *Annals of Dunstaple*, was also living at this time, and says, without intimating any thing of the poison, that the king died in the Castle of Newark, on the morrow of St. Luke. And so the *Annals of Margan*, which terminate A. D. 1233, and the *Annals of Waverley*, written probably about the same time, only say the king died after three or four days illness at Newark. The *Annals of Maibros*, continued to the year 1270, and the *Annals of Burcour*, whose author is thought to have been contemporary with MATHEW PARIS, agree on the same point, as do other historians near the time; nor does any author mention the poison until 80 years afterwards.

WALTER HEMINGFORD, who died 1347, first relates circumstantially the story. The king, he tells us, hearing the Abbot of Swinshed had a fair sister, a prioress in the neighbourhood, sent for her; that the Abbot was uneasy at it, and the Hospitaller of the monastery said to him "Do but absolve me, father, and pray for me, and I will rid the earth of this monster;" that the Abbot was scrupulous, because he was the King; and that the Hospitaller proceeded nevertheless, and as he knew the King loved new pears, brought some that were all poisoned, except three that had had marked, and offered them to him. Upon which the precious stones in the King's ring began to sweat; and he said to his host, "What is this you have brought me?—Poison"—"not poison," said he, "but excellent fruit."—That the King, by way of precaution, bade him eat one, which he did, taking one that was marked; he bade him

another, and he did so, then a third after which the King ate one himself, and died the same night.

CAXTON alters this story, which seems a purely legendary one, and states, that the king hearing it said when he was at the abbey, how cheap corn then was, and swored he would ere long make it so dear that a penny loaf should be sold for a shilling. Hence ROBERT OF GLOUCESTER, speaking of this king says:—

"And dude the lond wo enow, and more he het;"

that upon this, a monk then present, took such indignation, that he went, and put the poison of a toad into a cup of wine, and came and drank to the king, which made him pledge him the more readily. After the king had made his draft and found himself ill, he asked for the monk; and when it was told him he was dead; "GOD have mercy upon me!" said the king, "I doubted as much;" and so he died in two days.

Against both these stories, besides the silence of the historians mentioned, it has been observed, that when the Abbot of Crozton, who was JOHN's physician, embowelled him, it is not said that any signs of poison appeared, or that the operator had an apprehension of any foul play, though CAXTON and the English Chronicles assert his belly was swelled with the poison; neither does the king say any thing more in his will, than, that he was, *gravi infirmitate pressus veritus*. And it is further to be noticed, that though the king's party were shortly afterwards triumphant at Newark, and at no great distance from Swinshed, not the least inquiry, is stated to have been made, respecting so atrocious and traitorous an act, against the deceased sovereign. Whereas, one might have expected to hear of a total dissolution of the house, the erasement of the buildings, the seizure of the estate, and the degradation and expulsion of the abbot and monks. Not one of these things however happened, but the monastery continued to exist and flourish till the time of the general suppression. A strong presumption that a crime of so black a die had never been committed at the place.

Bishop TANNER (*Notitia Monastica*) says, this Swinshed was an abbey for Cistertian monks, and was founded in 1134, in the marshes near this place, by ROBT. DE GRAI-

LEI, to the honour of the B. V. M. That, at the time of the dissolution, there were only eleven religious in it, whose yearly revenues amounted to £80. The site was granted 5, EDW. VI. to EDWARD Lord Clinton.

It is a misfortune for the correctness of stage representation, as well as to be regretted by the lovers of our national antiquities, that no memorial of Swinshed Abbey exists, as it forms with its "orchard" and neighbourhood, the subject of three scenes in SHAKSPEARE's drama, actual views of which would have been highly interesting. The "palace" at Northampton and its "castle" (three or four scenes from which are also mentioned among the English views in the unmodernized editions of SHAKSPEARE's works) are in the same way lost to us.

Of Northampton Castle (scenes 1 and 4, in act IV.) BRYDGES, in his *History of Northampton*, gives several particulars. It was built by SIMON ST. LIZ, in temp. WILL. CONQ. and afterwards came into the possession of the crown. Here the barons and earls assembled on RICHARD the 1st's death, and by the persuasions of JOHN's agent, (who was then in Normandy) took an oath of fealty to him, and here JOHN, when monarch, in the 13th year of his reign, convened a council of the temporal nobility, at which PANDULPH, the papal legate, assisted. At the same place EDW. I. kept his Christmas, and EDW. III. held one of his parliaments. It stood a little without the west gate, upon high ground, overlooking the meadows and the country about Duston, and was on one side encompassed by a deep trench. The *keep* was large, and in LELAND's time bulwarks of earth were raised before the gate. The site within the walls occupied 3 acres. Part of this structure was used, in 1675, as the county gaol, part was standing when BRYDGES wrote, and other parts had only been pulled down a few years before, or early in the last century.

We have no information of such an edifice as Northampton Palace, a "state room" in which forms the opening scene in SHAKSPEARE's plays, though we read of Holdenby Palace, six miles from that town. Perhaps he meant to designate the castle by that name. Adverting to the recent revival of *King John* at Covent Garden Theatre,

[vide page 239.] we must observe of this scene that, in point of architectural correctness it is entitled to praise. Twenty years ago when this drama was revived at Drury lane Theatre, a judicious critic justly complained of the violation of historic truth, in this, and most of the other scenery, particularly the English views, and makes the following remarks as to the buildings of that period.—

"It is to be premised that the mode of architecture in King JOHN's day, was a mixture of the Saxon and pointed arch styles (vulgarly called gothic;) the latter creation at that time not having emerged from its parent stock, the Saxon art; therefore, those buildings, which had their foundations prior to King JOHN's era, must have been all of the Saxon taste."

In commending this view however (and it is the only part of the scenery which is correct) it should be observed that the king's throne, with its pinnacled ornaments, by no means corresponds, being in a style at least two centuries later. The monarch's great seal which represents him seated, would have furnished the precise authority wanted. There are *four* accredited statues of King JOHN: one in Westminster Hall, one on the Bristol Cross, now at Stourhead, one in York Cathedral, and one on his tomb in Worcester Cathedral. Of these the last, (well copied at Covent Garden Theatre) has indisputably the greatest claim to genuineness, both from its age and appropriation. The monarch's body was discovered here some years since, and a pamphlet with a print of it published; and though much decayed, a resemblance might be traced between the dress of the corpse and the effigy. King JOHN began his reign in 1199, and died 1216.

The dress of the other principal personages of the drama, with the exception of the maily armour, which is rather too glittering and theatrical, must be included in this praise. In a roll of purchases made for holding a grand tournament in Windsor Park, in the reign of EDW. I. (JOHN's grandson) the suit of armour for the knights is stated to consist of a *tunic*, a *surcoat*, a pair of *ailettes* (a sort of little wings, which appear on the monumental effigies of warriors of this period, and which were worn on the shoulders,) a *shield*, a *helmet of leather*, and a *sword*, or *baton*. The

shields were of wood, the pommels and hilts of the swords gilt with gold; the helmets of knights of the highest rank were gilt with pure gold. Head pieces of leather, resembling *horses heads* are mentioned. The *ailettes*, or little wings, cost 8d. a pair, and were tied with silken cords. Though not exactly fitted for the field the accoutrements, were no doubt actual representations of the warlike habit of the period, and could have differed but little from that worn in the reign of JOHN.

Of the furniture introduced in the interior of the royal mansions in this play, the critic just quoted laughably remarks—"The little stock of household stuff, decorating JOHN's palaces—as a table, and two or three fancy chairs, may be thus accounted for by managers; that they well knew, that as tradition has assigned in almost every town in the kingdom a building dignified by the name of "King JOHN's palace," it could not be expected they should with propriety have produced more than they have done for the said purposes. They likewise believe that our religious institutions were the mounds of luxurious living; and the elegant accommodation, is, therefore procured against JOHN's coming to Swinshed Abbey, of a most convenient modern *sofa*, for the unfortunate monarch to die on, forgetting, at the same time, to introduce any one of the fraternity, either to show that the monastery was inhabited, or that their ghostly comfort was necessary in the last agonizing moments of JOHN, their guest and king."

The *sofa*, however, (it should certainly not be modern) is to be justified on the score of costumic propriety, though objected to here; fur for the "king's couch," being expressly mentioned as an article to be purchased, among others, in the roll alluded to. It also mentions "*Double Gloves*" and "*Buckskin Gloves*" for the king, (things generally thought to have been then unknown) together with ivory combs for the king and queen, red carpets for his chamber, and velvet covering for his chamber, &c.

MISS FORDE.

When Music first subdued the mind,
And threw her magic spells around;
The God of Harmony design'd
A loftier intercourse of sound.
Responsive then the human voice,
In sweet accordance strove to reign,
Prolific as the varied choice,
That mark'd the soul impassion'd strain.
Succeeding thus—the genial flame
Of emulation fired the breast,
Till melody at length became,
With nature's eloquence impress'd.
Delightful science! wondrous art!
Of grief the balm, the zest of joy—
Whose pow'r can animate the heart,
And all its latent springs employ.
To thou! O FORDE, on whom descends
EUTERPE's choicest gifts, the Muse
In tributary gladness bends,
And o'er thy path her flow'ret strews;
For who, among the lyric throng,
When passion guides the votive lay,
Triumphant through the maze of song,
Can such ecstatic power display—
The depth and richness of thy tones,
Vibrating on the dullest ear—
The skill that inspiration owns,
When mounting on her bright career—
The grace and beauty that combine,
Whene'er thy lovely form is seen
To place before the drama's shrine,
Attraction's fairest, softest mien;
Such charms, sweet FORDE, to thee belong,
And such the merit of thy lays,
CECILIA triumphs in thy song,
And rapture guides the voice of praise.

H. R. H. P. D.

THE NOTE BOOK.

[For Correspondents.]

No. 2.

1. Ferdinand Mendez Pinto.

In answer to Mr. Chapman's enquiry, respecting the above named personage, in No. 1. of "*The Note Book*," the little light I am able to throw upon the subject is as follows:—Pinto was a Portuguese, born about the year 1540. Becoming a fugitive from his country at a very early age, he travelled through many parts of Africa and Asia, for 21 years, and by his own account, encountered a surprizing number of distressful adventures. The translation of his travels into French, forms a very thick quarto volume, and bears date in the year 1628. They have also, I believe, made their appearance in an English dress. Pinto has doubtless been guilty of numberless falsehoods, but nevertheless, many things which he relates, and which were formerly considered to be mere fabrications, have by subsequent travellers been discovered to be founded in truth.

Dramaticus.

2. Farinelli.

From the information given to me, by a lady who knew Farinelli, at Bologna, and who has sung with him in private at that city, after he quitted Spain, I am enabled to answer a part of Mr. Robert's enquiries. Two of the songs, which were uniformly called for by Philip V. were "*Pallido il Sole*," and "*Il Rosignale*." Carlo Broschi, when he first made his appearance in Italy, as a singer, was known by the name of "*Il Ragazzo*," the boy. He was afterwards protected by a counsellor Farino, from which circumstance he took the name of Farinelli, as he will be seen spelt in the operas, composed by Hasse, Porpora, &c. His contemporary "Senesino," was so called, from being a native of Sienna, his family name being "Bernardo."

T. T.

3. HOWLEGLAS.

The "satisfactory intelligence," required by IAGO, of this curious personage, is, perhaps, impossible to be obtained; however for his information, and for the amusement of the readers of this work, I have here thrown together all I have been able to collect, and, to which, I am not aware, any thing more can be added.

"HOWLEGLAS is a buffoon of foreign origin, but well known to our biblio-maniacs in an English garb. The tract which commemorates his errors, is of immense rarity, so as to bid defiance to commentators and critics;—see, in Mr. GIFFORD's edition of BEN JONSON's works, id its noticed in its proper place. The "reading public," are indebted for the little knowledge they possess of him, to the novel of "*The Abbott*," where it is just hinted, that such a person once existed. In GARRICK's collection of quarto plays and romances, is preserved his history, entitled "*Here beginneth a merry Jest of a Man that was called* HOWLEGLASS, *and of many marvelous things and jestes that he did in his lyfe in Eastlonde, and in many other places.*"

In the title-page is a rude wood-cut, representing a king upon his throne, before whom stand two figures, a woman, and a man holding a pitch-fork in his hand. The colophon is, "*Thus endeth the lyfe of* HOWLEGLAS.—*Imprynted at London, in Tame Strete, at the Vintre, on the Crased Wharfe, by* WYLLYAM COPLAND;" black letter, no date, but between 1548 and 1569, in which time COPLAND printed. His history is anonymous, but contains a remarkable apology from the author, of which no one will deny the necessity:

"For the great desyring and prayeng of my good frendes, and I, the first writer of the boke, might not denye the; thus have I compiled and gathered much knayvyshnes and falsenes of one HOWLEGLAS, made and done within his lyfe, whych HOWLEGLAS dyed in ye. yeare of our Lorde God M.CCC.L. Nowe I desyre to be pardoned both before ghostly and worldly, afore high and lowe, afore noble and comune. And right lowly I require all those yt. shall reade or heare this prese be feste (my ignorance to excuse.) This fable is not but onely to renewe ye mindes of men or women of all degrees, fro' ye. use of sadnesse, to passe

THE NOTE BOOK.

[For Correspondents.]

No. 2.

1. Ferdinand Mendez Pinto.

In answer to Mr. Chapman's enquiry, respecting the above named personage, in No. 1. of "*The Note Book*," the little light I am able to throw upon the subject is as follows:—Pinto was a Portuguese, born about the year 1510. Becoming a fugitive from his country at a very early age, he travelled through many parts of Africa and Asia, for 21 years, and by his own account, encountered a surprising number of distressful adventures. The translation of his travels into French, forms a very thick quarto volume, and bears date in the year 1628. They have also, I believe, made their appearance in an English dress. Pinto has doubtless been guilty of numberless falsehoods, but nevertheless, many things which he relates, and which were formerly considered to be mere fabrications, have by subsequent travellers been discovered to be founded in truth.

Dramaticus.

2. Farinelli.

From the information given to me, by a lady who knew Farinelli, at Bologna, and who has sung with him in private at that city, after he quitted Spain, I am enabled to answer a part of Mr. Robert's enquiries. Two of the songs, which were uniformly called for by Philip V. were "*Pallido il Sole*," and "*Il Rosignole*." Carlo Broschi, when he first made his appearance in Italy, as a singer, was known by the name of "*Il Ragazzo*," the boy. He was afterwards protected by a counsellor Farina, from which circumstance he took the name of Farinelli, as it will be seen spelt in the operas, composed by Hasse, Porpora, &c. His contemporary "Senesino," was so called, from being a native of Sienna, his family name being Bernardo.

T.

3. HOWLEGLAS.

The "satisfactory intelligence," required by IAGO, of this curious personage, is, perhaps, impossible to be obtained; however for his information, and for the amusement of the readers of this work, I have here thrown together all I have been able to collect, and, to which, I am not aware, any thing more can be added.

HOWLEGLAS is a buffoon of foreign origin, but well known to our biblio-maniacs in an English garb. The tract which commemorates his errors, is of immense rarity, so as to bid defiance to commentators and critics;—one, in Mr. GIFFORD's edition of BEN JONSON's works, is to be noticed in its proper place. The "reading public," are indebted for the little knowledge they possess of him, to the novel of "*The Abbott*," where it is just hinted, that such a person once existed. In GARRICK's collection of quarto plays and romances, is preserved his history, entitled "*Here beginneth a merry Jest of a Man that was called* HOWLEGLASS, *and of many marveylous things and jestes that he did in his lyfe in Eastlande, and in many other places.*"

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ye tyme with laughter or myrthe, and for because ye simple knowyng persones should beware if folkes can see. Me thinke it is better no(1) passe the tyme with suche a merry jeste and langhe thereat and doo no synne, than for to wepe and do synne."

The compiler, therefore, was aware that he was offending against the purity of authorship, and soliciting a pardon it was impossible to grant in modern times; but his bad taste was that of the age. This volume has not found an editor, although nearly as scarce as "*The hundred merry Tales*," the only existing copy of which was found pasted into the binding of an old book. But to return to HOWLEGLAS: I have gone through his memoirs with a pair of scissars, preserving a few circumstances, from which a slight sketch of his life may be given.

TYELL, son of NICHOLAS, and MYPEKE HOWLEGLAS, was born in the village of *Ruehnige*, in the land of Sassen,(2) about the commencement of the fifteenth century; he was baptized a member of the Christian religion, and his biographer particularly remarks, underwent a triple immersion; for after the ceremony had been performed by the minister, he was carried from the church by a drunken midwife, who dropped him in a muddy ditch, from the stains of which, he was purified by ablution. "And thus was HOWLEGLAS thre tymes in one dai christened, once at the churche, once in the mudde, and once in the warm water." As he grew in years, he increased in knavery and cunning, highly reprehensible in the commission and wearisome in the relation. His pranks were diversified, and only proportioned to the characters he assumed. He set out in life as parish clerk of *Bruddeneste*; but became a quack, and plagued the faculty of Meyborough; after which he successively appeared as a pardoner, a tailor, cook to a merchant, servant to a blacksmith, and eventually to a shoe-maker. At one time he endeavoured to obtain a name as a maker of spectacles, a trade which gained him neither credit nor profit. Going to a convent, at *Merienhall*, he so loosened the stairs by which the monks came down to prayers, that they were all precipitated into the

(1) Query, *to*. (2) Saxony.

yard below. This is not to be wondered at; for all persons of his stamp were obnoxious to the monks, and he rarely omitted an opportunity of plaguing them. At length he became so notorious a character, that the Grand Duke of Luxemburg banished him from his dominions.

The best chapter in the collection of "*Jestes*," under his name, contains a specimen of his poetical imagination, which, if authentic, was not beneath notice in that barren age. "How HOWLEGLAS came to a scholer to make verses with hym, to that use of reason; and howe that HOWLEGLAS, began, as after shall followe." The *Jester* asserts, while the *Scholar* argues in a conversation respecting MARS, VENUS, and BACCHUS, from which I have extracted the second, in order to exhibit his ideas on the subject:

HOWLEGLAS.

"VENUS, a god of Love, most decorate
The floure of women, a ladye most pure
Lovers to concorde, she doth aye aggregate
With parfyte love, as marble to dure
The knot of love, she knittes on them sure
With friendlye amite, and never to discorde
By dedes, thought, cogitacion, nor worde."

SCHOLAR.

"Not to discorde, yet dyd I never see,
Knowe, nor here tell, of lovers suche and wayne,
But some faute there was;(1) learne this of me,
Ither in thought, or yet in wordes playne,
Your reasons be nought, your tonge goeth in vayne
By naturall person: such love is no found
In Fraunce, Flaunders, nor yet in Englyish ground.(2)"

At length after wasting his life in this rambling way, HOWLEGLAS fell sick in 1450, at Mollem; on his death-

(1) JOHNSON says, "a fallible being will fail somewhere."
(2) The Scholar is evidently a bachelor, and his opinions are those of a woman hater: his *compliment* to England is worthy of notice.

bed, being desired to confess his sins, he answered "I will not confesse me secretli, for all that I have done, I have done it ope'ly, to many men in dyvers landes, and that is well knowe. For they that I have done good to, they wil saye good of me; and they that I have done harme to, they wil say harme of me." He then made his will, dividing his personal estate in three parts, of which he bequeathed one to his relatives, another to the Lords, and the third to the priest of Mollem; and desired to have christian burial, the *Placebo*, and *Dirige* being sung over his grave. This request was reasonable, and nothing impeded it, but his incorrigible propensity to lying and cheating; for in consequence of a *hoax* put upon some nuns, he was interred under a gibbet, the coffin being placed in the ground upright, as befitting so singular a character; "and in this manner they left HOWLEGLAS, stand[ing] bolt upright in his grave, and they covered him with earth, and then they layde a stone. And on the stone was graven an *Owle*, holding a *Glasse* with her clawes(1), and thereon was grayen this scripture.

'Presume no man a waye this stone to take,
For under this stone was HOWLEGLAS buried late,
In the year of our Lorde God M.C.C.C.C. and fyftie.'

HOWLEGLAS appears to have been a favourite with the public in scenic and rural exhibitions. In the novel of "*the Abbot*," one of his representatives is introduced in so masterly a manner, that I trust my readers will excuse the insertion of a passage which must be familiar to all:

"He wore a mitre of leather, with a front like a grenadier's cap, adorned with mock embroidery, and trinkets of tin; this surmounted a visage, the nose of which was the most prominent feature, being of unusual size, and at least as richly gemmed as his head-gear. His robe was of buckram, and his cope of canvas, curiously painted, and cut into open work. On one shoulder was fixed the

(1) The play on these words at first appears to be rendered into the English, which would destroy the authenticity of the story; but it will do as well in German,—*Eule* signifying an owl, and *Glas*, glass.

painted figure of an *Owl*; and he bore in his right hand, his pastoral staff, and in the left a small *Mirror*, having a candle to it; thus resembling a celebrated Jester, whose adventures, translated into English, were whilom extremely popular, and which may be still procured in black letter, for about one pound per leaf." V. 1. pp. 299, 300.(1)

This fictitious game is placed about the year 1567; but a genuine personification of *Howleglas* remains in BEN JONSON's drama of "*The Fortunate Isles, and their Union, celebrated in a Masque designed for the Court, on the Twelfth Night*, 1626" in which the ghosts of SKELTON and HENRY SCOGAN, two other very celebrated Jesters are introduced. *Jophiel*, thus addresses *Merefool*,(2) who wishes to see some spirits:—

"I mean a person he would have restor'd
To memory of these times, for a playfellow,
Whether you would present him with an HERMES,
Or with an HOWLEGLAS?"

Upon which SKELTON says

"An HOWLEGLAS
To come to pass
On his father's Ass,
There never was,
By day or night,
A finer sight,
With feathers upright
In his horned cap,
And crooked shape,
Much like an ape,
With *Owl* on fist,
And *Glass* at his wrist."

After which a procession enters, consisting of "*Howleglass*, the four *Knaves* [of Cards], two Ruffians, [*Fitz-ale* and *Vapour*), *Elinor Rumming*, *Mary Ambree*, *Long Meg*

(1) In another passage he is called "the Venerable Father HOWLEGLAS."

(2) By contraction from *Merry-fool*, a fair staghe of satire.

of Westminster, Tom Thumb, and Doctor Rat. They dance and withdraw".

After the downfall of the stage in 1646 we meet with no more representations of HOWLEGLAS, nor can it be regretted, for he appears to have enjoyed a much greater celebrity than he deserved. C. G. Cumb.

Of this worthy character, (the mention of whom is to be found in a great many old plays and poems) I think there can be no doubt but he is an invention of the brain, and that no such personage ever existed but in an author's fancy. This will, I imagine, be found from an inspection of the title page and contents of the tract in the GARRICK collection, cited above. To attempt therefore the discovery of the origin of such a fanciful being, would be but a useless task. He appears to have been noted for lying, cheating, and all kinds of mischievousness, and it is therefore no wonder that we find him noticed by various writers of the olden time. One of his *Jests*, which I have extracted from the above mentioned tract, is as follows:

"Within a whyle after, or that he would enter into ye abbay of Maryandra to be a Munke, he went a walkying on the Market daye to Bremen, wher he saw many women standing there to sell creame. And then went HOWLEGLAS to the house where he was lodged, and borrowed a tub of his hostess and went again into ye market. And whan he was there, he set down his tub, and came to a woman of the countrie, and he asked the price of her creame. And when they were both agreed, he made her for to put the creame into his tub, and then he went to another, and agreed with her also, and made her to put the creame into his tub; and so went he from the one to the other, tyll that he had made all the women, that had the creame, to put it into his tub. And when he had soo done: than asked the poore women there money of HOWLEGLAS, for they wolde departe home. Than sayde HOWLEGLAS to the women, ye must do so much for me as to trust me these eight dayes, for I have no money at thys tyme. Than ware the women of the countrey angry, and thei run to the tub for to take every one of them their creame again, for thei would not trust him

And as thei wuld have taken theyr creame again, than began thei to fal together by the eares, and sayde, Thou takest more than thou should have. And the other stoode all wepping, and sayde to them, shall I loose my creame. And other twayn were tumblyng the here in the myddes of the canel (kennel). And thus they pulled and haled on the other, that at the last the tub fell downe and smayed the very foule, so that they were all dysfygured, and wist not of whome the should be avenged on. And the arose the and asked where is this false knave yt hath beught our mylke, and bath deceved us so, for had we hym here amonge us, we shoulde chrysten hym here in the creame that is in the cannell, and paint hym therwith as well as we he, for he is a false begyler and dysceyer. But he was gone from thence, for he cast before yt such a thyng shulde folowe. And whan the Burgeys of the towne and many other folke of the towne sawe that the cannels ran with creame, than went thei to the market place to se. And wha yt ware ther, they asked how the creame was spylt, and the it was tolde them. And whan that he knew it, than the returned home laughyng, and praised greatli yt falseness and subtilte of HOWLEGLAS".

PETER TOMKINS.

4. GOLDSMITH'S "*She Stoops to Conquer*."

The Anecdote of GOLDSMITH'S "*Mistake of a Night*," in the house of SIR RALPH FETHERSTON, of Ardagh, Co. Longford, rests upon the authority of the Poet's niece Mrs. CATHARINE HUDSON, daughter of the Revd. HENRY GOLDSMITH, of Lissoy, who detailed it, and many other interesting particulars, to the author of the "*Life of* GOLDSMITH," prefaced to the edition of his works in 4 vols. published by OTRIDGE & SON &c., in London 1812. (See p. 7 of the 1st Vol. of that work.)

We have no evidence that GOLDSMITH had heard of the jest ascribed to the facetious Mr. GRUMBETT, of Lincolnshire. "*She Stoops to Conquer*," made its first appearance at Covent Garden Theatre on the 15th March, 1773. (Not 1771 as stated in the 3rd Vol. of the "*Drama*.") The late Sir THOMAS FETHERSTONE, Bart., a few years ago

positively asserted that the anecdote respecting GOLDSMITH's mistake at his grandfather's house, was authentic, and it is more likely that the plot of the comedy should have been suggested by an adventure of his own, than by any other of which the author might have heard. The above, will, I trust, prove satisfactory to your enquiring correspondent, and set at rest any doubts, which he, or others, may entertain upon the subject.

C.G.C.

SLENDER AND ANNE PAGE.

[*From a Picture by Leslie.*]

BY THE REV. GEORGE CROLY.

'Tis the merry month of June,
Now the day is in its noon;
And the scented breeze that play'd
Idling through the jasmine's braid,
To its mossy cave has flown:
Every rose in morning blown
Bends its sweet head to the ground,
Like a nymph with hair unbound,
Turning her coy cheek away
From the burning kiss of Day.
And the violet's dewy gem,
Queen *Titania's* diadem;
Hides its beauty in the shade
By the glossy ivy made.
Now has died the hollow stroke
Of the woodman on the oak;
Weary sounds the homeward horn,
On the sultry echoes borne:
And the wild bees' pleasant hum
Busier round the thyme has come;
Colouring the sunbeams all
On the mansions antique wall,
O'er the Gothic carv'd crosee
Floats a silken canopy,
Scutcheon'd rich with many a stain,
Like a saintly cloister pane.

But who beneath the fiery noon,
Stands in the garden path alone!
Fantastic fool! he feels no blaze,
While on himself he feasts his gaze:
Sir Slender?—living vanity!
And who is laughing, bounding nigh?
The young coquette, with step of air,
Bright eye, red cheek, and forehead fair,
Cluster'd by curls of burnish'd brown,
Like gold upon the lilly thrown:
'Tis "sweet *Anne Page*!" She comes to tell
The beating of the dinner bell:
In vain she tries her merry wiles,
Sings, dances round him, teases, smiles,
Stamps by his ear her fairy feet,
Flings on him rose and violet;
While *Falstaff*, from his gallery,
Turns on the pair his large, deep eye;
And spite of frolic, fat, and age,
Dreams of thy beauties, sweet *Anne Page*!

DRAMATIC NECROLOGY.

FOR 1823—4.

"——Alas! where now's the droll,
Whose every look and gesture was a joke
To clapping theatres and shouting crowds;
And made e'en thick-lipp'd musing melancholy
To gather up her features in a smile
Before she was aware? Ah, sullen now,
And dumb, as the green turf that covers him."—

March .—At New York, Mr. J. TYLER, aged 75, the oldest member of the dramatic corps in America, who went from England in 1795, and was well known and respected at the Portsmouth, Southampton, Winchester, and other provincial theatres.

21st.—Aged 45, the celebrated and eccentric BILLY WATERS, (whose conspicuous character in "*Life in London*," gained him so much notoriety,) after being 10 days in St. Giles's workhouse in a lingering condition.—Poor BILLY endeavoured, up to the period of his illness, to acquire for a wife and two children what he termed "an honest living, by the *scraping* of cat-gut," by which he originally amassed a considerable portion of *browns* (halfpence) at the west end of the town, where his hat and feathers, with his peculiar antics, excited much mirth and attention. BILLY latterly became unfortunate, which he attributed to the production of *Tom and Jerry*, with whom he was made to take *madeira* (Madeira), and treat "bags of victuals" with contempt; but however he died very poor, and was obliged, prior to his death, to part with his old friend the fiddle for a trifling sum at a pawnbroker's; and the wooden *pin* (leg) which had so often supported BILLY, would have shared the same fate, but its long services had rendered it worthless. It had twice saved poor BILLY the horrors of the *tread-mill*. He was formerly a sailor, and received a trifling pension since he left the service. A short time prior to his death, he was elected King of a party of beggars in St. Giles's, in consequence of his notoriety. He resided with his family in the house of Mrs. FITZGERALD, Church-street, St. Giles's. His remains were removed from the work-house to the new burial-ground, St. Pancras, where he was interred. He was followed to the grave by his wife and children, with a few old friends, some *professional* ones.

April 13th. At his lodgings in Plough Court, Thomas Street, Bristol, aged 72 years, JOHN HAYDN, once a celebrated comedian and manager of a theatre, but who has for the last 7 years supported himself by selling fruit about the streets of Bristol, generally on market days, near the Rummer tavern, and whose gentleman-like appearance and manners attracted the attention and interest of many.

June 30th. At Stamford, Lincolnshire, aged 43, OCTAVIUS GRAHAM GILCHRIST, Esq. a gentleman of great literary attainments, and well known for his defence of SHAKSPEARE.

July 17th. At Leeds, Mr. WILLIAMS, a member of the theatrical company of that town.—The following account of the melancholy circumstances attending this unfortu-

late gentleman's death is from the pen of a correspondent, forwarded to us at the time.

"LEEDS, *Thursday, July 17th.* 1823.—A considerable sensation was produced in this town by the report of Mr. WILLIAMS having cut his throat: and on examination it was found that it had been done with such desperate resolution, as instantly to terminate his life—the following is part of the evidences produced before Mr. ATKINSON, the coroner.

On the day previous to his death, he would not take any breakfast, and appeared in a very distressed state of mind; soon after witness went to his room, and found him dreadfully agitated; witness enquired the cause of his distress, on which he answered,—"*I find there is no hope for me—I must be damned:*" in a short time he became more composed and witness left him.—About one o'clock, on witness's visiting him again, he found him in the attitude of acting, but he soon became more composed, and told witness, he had been in a trance, that he had seen both devils and angels, and also his wife, who had been dead many years—he also shewed him a book, *Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary*, in which he had just written, and said that his son (who was in reality in Hull) would call for it in ten minutes. He had written in a legible hand, "*a gift from his poor father to* HENRY JAMES WILLIAMS."—This conduct alarmed the family, and they took away his razors.—In the afternoon he asked for them, and used them, he then went to the theatre to pack his boxes—in the evening he was still more collected and went to bed.—While witness was at breakfast on Thursday, he was alarmed by a noise in Mr. W's room, and went to see if he could do any thing for him. On entering he found deceased with his throat cut from ear to ear, and the windpipe completely severed, his left hand was nearly cut off by the wrist—when medical assistance arrived it was too late.

Mr. W. had very respectable connections, he has a brother a Lieutenant-Colonel in the army—he was tall and rather corpulent, his age was between 50 and 60. His principal characters were those of *Duncan* in "*Macbeth*," *Old Dornton* in "*Road to Ruin*," *Sir Frederic Vernon*, in "*Rob Roy*," the *Duke of Gloster*, in "*King Lear*," *Alonzo*, in the

"*Tempest*," &c.—He was by no means a first rate actor, but was generally respectable and always correct in the characters he played, which were very numerous. He had been a member of the York company for many years, and was generally respected. I believe his son, who was in necessitous circumstances, on account of his father's embarrassments, has received assistance from several of the members of the company, in a manner that does them great credit; he has also had a benefit."

Nov. 10th. At Vienna, in his 80th year, the celebrated composer SALIERI, author of the music *des Danaïdes*. The "*Etoile*" says he committed suicide.

Decr. 29th. At Oswestry, in Shropshire, Mr. W. KNIGHT, a gentleman whose talents in Irishmen, and low comedy, joined with his engaging deportment off the stage, will make his death sincerely regretted by all his friends.

1824. Jan. 19th. At Worcester, Mr. JAMES TRENT, formerly a vocal performer at Covent Garden Theatre. His death was occasioned by the fall of one of the stands in the Worcester race course, during the celebrated fight for the championship of England between LANGAN and SPRING. The following particulars are from the "*Hereford Journal*."

The deceased, it appears, was upon the northern range of the building at the time of its giving way, and was taken from amidst the mass of disjointed timber, with a compound fracture of the right leg near the ankle joint, and a part of the bone protruding through the skin. The sufferer was immediately conveyed to the Infirmary, where he received that skilful treatment and attention, his calamitous state required; the fracture was reduced, and for five or six days there was every reason to hope he would do well, and that amputation would be unnecessary. In the course of Friday, however, inflammation, fever, and delirium presented themselves, and upon a consultation being held among the medical attendants of the Institution, it was decided that the only chance of saving the patient's life was the instant removal of the limb. The unfortunate man, being informed of this decision, and convinced of its necessity, assented to the operation. It was accordingly performed the same evening, but, unhappily, so rapidly had the inflammation spread [illegible]

throughout his system, that no human effort could arrest its progress, and after lingering until about four o'clock in the afternoon of Monday, the poor fellow expired. On Wednesday an inquest was held upon the body, at the Infirmary, before JOHN PLATT, Esq. one of the Coroners for Worcester. The examination of witnesses occupied from eleven in the morning until seven in the evening. The main purport of the inquiry was to ascertain whether the circumstances attending it were the result of culpable negligence, and if so, upon whom was such negligence chargeable. Mr. SHARE, clerk of the course, and Mr. WOOD, a carpenter, were the two witnesses whose testimony touched more particularly upon this point, and never was testimony upon the same subject more conflicting or more at variance. It was stated by the former, that the timber for the structure was not only supplied by Mr. WOOD, but that he superintended the erection; on the other hand, Mr. WOOD denied having further to do with the buildings than the furnishing of the materials, and the aid of some workmen to put them up. It would appear to have been the endeavour of these two gentlemen each to rid himself of the onus arising from the insecurity of the erections, and the fatal results consequent thereupon, and (as between the two it rested) necessarily to cast it upon the other. As to what success attended either, we forbear offering an opinion. We understand the matter will shortly become the subject of legal inquiry, either by indictment or action, and therefore it would be most improper in us to do so. The jury paid the utmost attention throughout the laborious investigation, and, upon hearing an able and impartial summing up of the evidence by the Coroner, after some deliberation, returned a verdict of "Accidental Death" deodand upon the timber, 1*l.* The deceased was forty-two years of age, and has left a widow and two children to deplore his untimely end. The former arrived by the mail during the time the inquest was sitting, of course aware of the accident, but unconscious of its fatal termination; and we shall not attempt to describe her distress when acquainted with the loss of an affectionate husband. The poor woman, during her stay at Worcester, met with much kind consideration from several individuals, and she also received 10*l.* from Mr. SHARE towards reimbursing

the expenses of the funeral, &c. We are sorry to hear that the unfortunate man's circumstances were such that his widow and children are left in a state of almost utter destitution."

24.—Mr. Mc. CULLOCK, Prompter of Covent Garden Theatre. His funeral which took place on Friday the 30th was attended by Messrs. LISTON, BARTLEY, EGERTON, FAWCETT, T.P.COOKE, RAYNER, BAKER, PARSLOE and others, as a testimony of the respect they bore to the deceased.

26.—At her house at Woolwich, aged 73, Mrs. HARTLEY, the once celebrated beautiful and admired actress. She was a cotemporary with GARRICK, and, we believe the only one that remained, excepting Mr. QUICK, and Mrs. MATTOCKS, still alive. Her extreme beauty, and the truth and nature of her acting, attracted universal admiration and caused her to rank the highest (as a female) in her profession, previous to the appearance of Mrs. SIDDONS. Mr. HULL had written his tragedy of "*Henry the 2nd, or Fair Rosamond*", several years previous to its production, and despaired of obtaining a proper representative for the character of *Rosamond* until the above lady appeared. MASON also, the celebrated poet, wrote his tragedy of "*Elfrida*", that she might personify the principal character. "*Elfrida*" has always been admired as a beautiful poem, but is not calculated for stage effect; it was nevertheless at that time supported and even rendered highly attractive by the person and talents of Mrs. H. She was the very favourite subject of Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS, and appears as the beautiful female in a number of his most celebrated pictures. Two in particular are professed portraits of her, called "Mrs. HARTLEY, as *Jane Shore*," and "Mrs. HARTLEY as a *Bacchante*." A fine study for the former was recently sold at the late celebrated sale of the Marchioness of THOMOND's pictures at CHRISTIES. She died in easy circumstances, her merits during her public services having procured her a handsome independence.

Feb. 1.—At Cheltenham, aged 78, the Rev. Sir HENRY BATE DUDLEY, Bart, a gentleman who for above half a century has been distinguished in the literary and political world. His father was a respectable clergyman at Chelms-

ford in Essex by whom he was educated and afterwards sent to College. His first engagement in public or political life was his establishing the *Morning Chronicle* and *Herald* Newspapers—the latter in 1780, the former a few years previous. He also commenced the *Courier de l'Europe*, and the *English Chronicle*. Of the *Morning Herald* he was for may years sole proprietor, and he supported the paper with extraordinary success, by his wit, and versatility of talent. To the *Probationary Odes* and the *Rolliad*, which at that time drew universal attention, he contributed largely; and wrote entirely the "*Vortigern and Rowena*," a satirical work, pourtraying with admirable spirit, and in the diction of SHAKSPEARE, the characters of all the eminent persons of that day. This appeared at the time of IRELAND's forgery. In the time of GARRICK he produced the Opera of the "*Rival Candidates*" at D. L. T. and afterwards the "*Blackamoor washed White*," which, in consequence of party spirit running so high at that period, caused a contest among the audience, with drawn swords, upon the stage itself. He was the author of the Operas of the "*Flitch of Bacon*", and "*The Woodman*". The former was written for the Haymarket for the purpose of introducing his friend SHIELD, as a composer to the public. The rest of his dramatic works are: "*The Travellers in Switzerland*, and *At Home*", a bagatelle produced about 10 years ago. To Sir HENRY the country is in a great measure indebted for one of its ornaments—GAINSBOROUGH. His patronage of this excellent painter in early life principally contributed to his subsequent success. He was also the patron of DE SOLME, who wrote the work upon the Constitution; LA VOISIER, who established the present beautiful system of chemistry; and of every man of merit who needed and solicited his assistance. He was the intimate friend of GARRICK, of the EARL of SANDWICH, (who patronized the celebrated navigator Capt. COOK), of the Elder COLMAN, of SHERIDAN, of CUMBERLAND, of BONNEL THORNTON, of Mrs. COWLEY, Mr. RICHARDSON, author of the Comedy of the "*Fugitive*", and the associate of all the wits of his day. He first discovered the merits of Mrs. SIDDONS, who was then performing in a barn at Cheltenham, and mentioned her to GARRICK, who commissioned

either that his knowledge was confined, or his sentiments coarse and indelicate. Such admissions they think would argue poverty of genius; as if genius necessarily implied knowledge and delicacy of feeling. M. SCHLEGEL, whose lectures on dramatic literature are in high repute, not only in this country but on the continent, is one among the many critics, who defends the grossest absurdities in SHAKESPEARE, sooner than admit either his want of learning or his want of taste. SHAKESPEARE in his play of "*As You Like It*," transfers the lion and serpents of the torrid zone, and the shepherdess of Arcadia to the forest of Ardennes; in which M. SCHLEGEL says he was justified, "because the design and import of his picture required them." This defence is erroneous. The poet, indeed, is at liberty to create what he pleases, to plant imaginary forests with imaginary lions, serpents, shepherdesses, or what other beings he pleases; but though he enjoys the most unrestricted license, while he describes creations that exist only in his own mind, yet when he comes to describe real existence and real objects with which we are ourselves presumed to be as well acquainted as he is, he must not shock our feelings by relations, which we know, not to be merely exaggerated, but absolutely false, unless it appear from the context or spirit of his work that such relations are ironically introduced, and that he was perfectly well acquainted at the time with the blunders which he was committing. No poetic license, therefore, save irony alone, or an affectation of ignorance, would justify a poet in placing St. Paul's in Bristol, and St. Peter's in London. SHAKESPEARE is equally unjustifiable in describing Bohemia surrounded by the sea; and Mr. SCHLEGEL in vindicating his propriety in doing so. But how can M. SCHLEGEL, or any of his admirers, suppose, for a moment, that to admit his ignorance of geography, or his anachronisms, is to impeach his genius, and to diminish the lustre of his fame? Genius and learning are not necessarily connected; nor have we the least reason to doubt, that greater geniuses have lived and died in ignorance, not only of geography and chronology, but of all the arts and sciences, than either SHAKESPEARE, HOMER, or MILTON

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste it's sweetness on the desert air."

It is certain, that no more than one-twentieth of mankind, in receive a liberal education; and without such an education, or at least, some approach to it, genius must necessarily remain unnoticed. It is, however, morally improbable, that one-twentieth of mankind should possess more genius and original powers of mind than the remaining nineteen-twentieths, though it is only in the former that it can make it's appearance. Ignorance of facts is, therefore, no proof either of genius, or of it's absence; because without reading and application, this knowledge is equally inaccessible to the man of genius and the dunce. Let us not, then, profess either to admire or defend such errors in SHAKSPEARE as arose from his limited knowledge. His fame rests on too firm a basis to be in the least affected by them, for it is absurd to suppose that a knowledge of geography or chronology is any test of genius, as the greatest dunce may be acquainted with both, if he will take the trouble. SHAKSPEARE derives his fame and immortality, not from that species of knowledge which can be communicated by instruction, but from that knowledge which no instruction can impart. All that is excellent in him, must be sought for in the originality of his thoughts, the depth of his observations on human nature, the power which he displays in tracing shades and variations of character, and in pursuing different passions through all the modifications which they assume, under the endless diversity of circumstances and situations, and which contribute to retard or accelerate their original tendency, and natural momentum.

Delicacy of feeling is more nearly allied to genius than acquired knowledge, and therefore it may be more difficult to vindicate SHAKSPEARE against the censure of those who upbraid him with grossness of manner, and who maintain, that in all his dramatic works, there is neither softness of handling, nor refinement of sentiment. His admirers, instead of attempting to account for the cause of his deficiency in this respect, flatly deny the charge. On what

authority they do so, I must confess myself ignorant; for I could never discover in SHAKSPEARE one passage that can be called softly elegant, delicately refined, or exquisitely tender. These characters of poetic excellence, are too feminine for his genius; and perhaps it may be said with equal truth, that they were too feminine for the genius of HOMER. Strength, dignity, energy, sublimity, and beauty, are the characteristic features of both. In HOMER however, there is more animation, in SHAKSPEARE more truth. HOMER viewed the bright side of human nature, and therefore all his characters may be said to be heroes. However various and diversified are the feelings which he excites in the human breast, there is one common character impressed upon them all; namely, vivacity, ardour, and enthusiasm; so that, as POPE justly observes, "no man of a truly poetical spirit is master of himself, while he reads him." This is not the character of the emotions which SHAKSPEARE calls forth. Instead of confining himself to the bright side of human nature, he viewed it on all sides; or, in other words, he viewed human nature as he found it to exist; he turned it inside out, and therefore may be said to have sifted it to the bottom, and to have painted it without colouring or disguise. Ardour and enthusiasm, consequently, are not the feelings which he excites, but wonder, astonishment, and veneration. We are surprised when we find ourselves admitted into the secret councils of the heart, and when the springs and motions of human actions are disclosed to our view; and therefore, though SHAKSPEARE frequently makes us laugh at the follies of mankind, yet we are serious even in our mirth; and proceed with alarm through all the mazes and labyrinths of human nature. It is in this wonderful developement of the human heart that the genius of SHAKSPEARE properly consisted, not in the tenderness and delicacy of feelings. His sentiments, indeed, were strictly moral and religious, but his genius was too stubborn to bend to the softness and elegance of refined delicacy. It is, however, a great mistake to suppose that delicacy and genius are necessarily allied; for there is little of it to be found in MILTON, and still less in HOMER, nor can it possibly exist but in cultivated society. Hence it is, that VIRGIL has more delicacy than either HOMER,

MILTON, or SHAKSPEARE, because he lived in a polished and refined age: but I doubt whether this acquired delicacy did not curb the natural impetuosity of his genius. For HOMER, who is still more delicate and refined than VIRGIL, has also less vigour of sentiment, and less sublimity of conception. The fact is, that delicacy of feeling belongs only to him who is always governed by reason, fitness, propriety, etiquette, and so forth; while genius is the characteristic of strong and ardent feelings, which disdains to consult reason even when it seems to be governed by it's precepts. The writer of genius writes as he feels, not as reason dictates to him; though the sentiments which his feelings suggest to him are often found to be in accordance with reason. It is, however, with his feelings alone that he holds secret council, and therefore he cares not whether reason assent or dissent from the sentiments which they impart. A writer who consults reason alone, is generally correct, so far as he proceeds, but if he attempt to probe the inmost recesses of the heart, he must not carry reason along with him; for she knows nothing of the heart, or it's affections. It is from his own feelings alone, and not from the abstract deductions of reason, that he can derive this knowledge. A great tragic writer, therefore, has nothing to do with reason, for reason neither inclines us to mirth or laughter: she tells us what she knows, not what she feels, and therefore we listen to her with unconcern. It is only feeling and passion that rouses the soul, and transports her with all the emotions, by which they are themselves actuated: but that delicacy of sentiment which is the offspring of reason and polished manners, is a weak instrument, in the hands of the tragic poet, who wishes to make us sympathize with the fortunes or misfortunes of his characters. "Men fit to disturb the peace of the world, and rule it when 'tis wildest," says Mr. KNIGHT, "are the proper materials for tragedy," and therefore those who lay such important stress on SHAKSPEARE's want of delicacy and refinement, seem to me very imperfectly acquainted with the true nature of dramatic genius. So far, therefore, from defending with some critics, the delicacy of SHAKSPEARE's sentiments, I maintain that those who censure him for the want of it, are indirectly, though unconsciously, advocating the

pre-eminence of that genius which they seek to decry. In conclusion, I shall observe with SCHLEGEL, that "that censorious spirit which scents out impurity in every sally of a bold and vivacious description, is at best but an ambiguous criterion of purity of morals; and there is frequently concealed under this hypocrisy the consciousness of an impure imagination."

But though SHAKSPEARE wants the refined language of delicate sentiment, he never violates the moral sanctity or dignity of human nature. Even in the coarsest expressions, there is nothing that countenances immorality or vice, while a deep sense of virtue and religion is upheld throughout; for even when he makes us laugh, and relaxes us from the severity of witnessing the superior energies and virtues of the soul called into action, the powerful impulse of the latter still remain, and fortify the heart against the transient influence of wit and revelry, till the stronger charms of energetic virtue are again renewed. We never depart, therefore, from witnessing his plays with any levity nor inconstancy of feeling. We never find our hearts balancing between the seductive allurements of vice, and the more potent influence of virtuous emotions. He makes us laugh, it is true, nor does he always address us with the polish of a courtier, but we see the honesty of his intention through the bluntness of his manner; we excuse him because it is his way; we know he makes us laugh only because he thinks there is no harm in laughing, and that virtue is not in the least endangered by a smile. He addresses himself not to the effeminately delicate, the fastidious austere, or the affectedly dignified; for he knew that the drama is intended for those only who can feel and give expression to their feelings, not for those platonic thinkers who look on a play like so many philosophic sages, watching the result of an experiment in physics. He therefore studies to make us feel, not to make us think; or rather he studies to make us feel so strongly, that we shall forget to think. The plays of SHAKSPEARE, therefore, are calculated to triumph over philosophy itself, while the plays of other writers are only calculated to convert us into philosophers. He hurries us along through the deep, awful, and interesting scenes which he discloses to our view: the

passions which he portrays in his characters take possession of ourselves, and we are so powerfully influenced by them, that we seem desirous of realizing those prospects of which they are in pursuit. Other dramatic writers, on the contrary, address the understanding more than the passions, not in general, because they think this the right course, but because they can pursue no other, because they are unacquainted with the human heart, and those instruments by which it is most powerfully agitated; in a word, because they do not feel themselves, and consequently have no feelings to communicate to others. Unable to make us feel, they necessarily make us reason; for he who is not moved by what passes before him, either begins to reflect on the cause of this want of emotion, and consequently to criticise the play, or otherwise, he directs his thoughts to some other subject of contemplation, for the mind cannot be at rest, and where the feelings are not powerfully engaged, the intellectual faculties are necessarily in action. While SHAKSPEARE therefore hurries us along the tide of feeling and of passion, other writers leave us to our own thoughts; so that with them we are philosophers or critics, but with him we are mere men, subject to all the frailties of our nature, and to all the impetuosity of our passions; and we rejoice to find it so. For it is to become men once more that we visit the theatre, knowing that it is here those original sympathies of the heart, which the indurating tenor of life represses and controls, can assume a momentary existence, and convince us that we are still men, and take an interest in every thing connected with our species.

Homo sum: humani nihil, a me alienum puto.

(To be continued.)

THEATRICAL INQUISITION.

"Long may the DRAMA shine, its friends increase,
The taunts of faction, and of envy cease;
With Justice, Virtue, for its constant end,
A foe to falshood, and to truth, a friend."

KINGS THEATRE.

January 24.—This magnificent temple of APOLLO opened this evening under the direction of Signor BENELLI—and perhaps never presented so rare a concentration of approved and brilliant talent as on this occasion. Rossini's opera of "*Zelmira*" commenced the performances. The story of which is as follows:

Polidoro, King of Lesbos, an aged and excellent Prince, was happy in the veneration of his people, and the tender affection of his daughter, *Zelmira*, and her spouse, *Ilo*, a magnanimous and valiant Trojan Prince. Engaged in a contest with an enemy who threatened his dominions, he was compelled to a temporary absence from the territory of his Royal father-in law. *Azore*, Lord of Mitylene, and lately the suitor of *Zelmira*, exasperated by *Polidoro's* refusal of her hand, determines to avail himself of the absence of *Ilo*, by invading and laying waste the dominions of the aged monarch. Conceiving the death of the Lesbian Prince to be necessary to his purpose of destroying the kingdom, he endeavours to discover the asylum to which he had retired. Concealed by his daughter in the tomb of his royal ancestors, *Polidoro* escapes the search of *Azore*, whose meditated vengeance is rendered still less attainable by *Zelmira's* feigned hatred of her father, for having deprived her of the fruits of her brilliant conquest of the heart of *Azore*, and the false information she gives of the place of his retreat, stating it to be the Temple of Ceres. *Azore's* mind is no sooner turned in that direction, than he condemns the sacred edifice to the flames. In the mean time, *Antenore*, who aspired to the throne of Mitylene, seconded by *Leucippe*, orders that, to the

of night, *Agorra* should be assassinated, in order that he himself may mount the throne of Lesbos, which object he, by his artifices, effects. But *Ilo*, having defeated his enemies, returns opportunely to the kingdom of his father-in-law and speedily, by the aid of his courageous followers, vanquishes and puts to flight the usurper, and reinstates *Polidoro* on his throne.

The principal performers were Mesds. COLBRAN, ROSSINI, VESTRIS; Signors GARCIA, CURIONI, PLACCI, PORTO, and FRANCHESCHI; the first and last of whom never before appeared in this country. Madame ROSSINI's voice, though not of the highest description, in point of tone or of compass, is tolerably powerful, and not without the quality of mellifluousness, while her style is finished, and her manner easy and elegant. Signor FRANCHESCHI possesses a good *fortamento*, and throws forth his tones with a freedom that produces an excellent effect. The merits of the other vocalists are too well known to require our dwelling upon their characteristic or distinguishing qualities, any further than to say, that they acquitted themselves with considerable *eclat*; and that, notwithstanding the inherent excellence of the music they had to perform, their exertions, at least, *contributed* to the composer's triumph. At the conclusion of the opera ROSSINI was called for; he came forward and received the loud and cordial greetings of the audience which he acknowledged with the most becoming and modest gracefulness.

A divertissement chivalresque followed, entitled "*Heur aus Dames*." And the whole concluded with a new Ballet, named "*L'adoration au Soleil*," which abounded in the rich display of oriental costume, of fascinating grace and varied and beautiful evolutions. The scene is laid in Persia, which gives great scope for the display of that gorgeous magnificence, both of natural scenery and of costume, which we are wont always to associate with the nations of the east, of which we have some very fine specimens in SHERIDAN's *Pizarro*, and in other popular plays on the English stage. The three pieces were loudly applauded; and we only feel difficulty in deciding to which was the warmest approbation awarded.

February 28th, Madame CATALANI made her first ap-

pearance, after a long and regretted absence, this evening, in the opera of *Il Fanatico per la Musica*. The announcement of her return created the most lively interest. The boxes had long been previously engaged; every part of the house was thronged to suffocation, before the conclusion of the overture. Such was the anxious interest, created by the first appearance of this lady, whose name in England is proverbially associated with the idea of unrivalled vocal excellence. The overture and opera, passed off with indifference, until the third scene, in which Madame CATALANI, as *Aristea*, appears. Previous to her coming forward, the utmost stillness prevailed, which was interrupted on her entrance, by a burst of applause from all parts of the house. It continued for several minutes, with unabated warmth, and was a tribute of welcome to this favourite performer, more cordial and animated than we were prepared to expect, from the unusually restrained expression of feeling, observed at this theatre. Madame CATALANI, acknowledged the loud and warm greeting of the audience, with the utmost grace and dignity of manner. As the applause continued, she became deeply affected—even to tears. The scene before her, was certainly one that must have produced a strong impression, even upon a mind not very sensitive. She appeared before an assembly, after a long lapse of years, whose admiration and partiality, must have filled her with the most grateful remembrances. She stood before an audience—the most refined and accomplished in the kingdom—the stamp of whose early approbation, was a passport to her after-fame. In personal appearance, Madame CATALANI is somewhat more *embonpoint* than when she was last before the public at this theatre—an alteration, which is certainly no small improvement to her fine personable figure. Her countenance still possesses the same finely intellectual expression that always distinguished it. She also retains the same grace and dignity of deportment—the same firmness and independence of tread upon the stage—the same gorgeous and magnificent flow of action, and the same lofty and sedulously-cultivated voice and brilliant execution, which have left her without a rival upon this or any other stage. She acquitted herself in a manner worthy of her high fame,

and we sincerely rejoice at her return to this theatre, in the undiminished possession of her unrivalled vocal powers. We understand she is to receive half the profits every night she performs.

NEW DRURY LANE THEATRE.

Journal of Performances, with Remarks.

February 24th.—Lodoiska—Rumfustian Innamorato, [1st time]—Cataract.

This is an Extravaganza after the style, and rather too closely founded on the models of those renowned chaste and admirable dramas, "*Tom Thumb*," "*Bombastes Furioso*," "Chrononhotonthologos" and others, which the managers of our great theatres now and then introduce, to share, with Shakspeare, Massinger, and Ben Jonson, the greeting and approval of a British audience. To give any thing like a plot of this "truly laughable burletta," as the play-bills term it, would be to imitate the conduct of those, who have brought it forward, and give no recompence to the public, for the loss of time and money. Suffice it to say, that in this "mock heroic piece," there are very many truly ridiculous scenes, mock-fights, mock-bravura's, mock-deaths, and mock-heroic revivals, in order to "die another night." Mr. Knight, as *Muffineer*, a respectable dealer in "all-hot," street pastry, is the rival of *Rumfustian* [Harley,] at the court of the *King of Quodlibet* [Oxberry,] in pretensions to *Squallerina* [Mrs. Orger;] from whence, after having been required, somewhat unchristianly, to go "*to the devil*," they proceed to "Turnham Green to fight it out!" Harley is here uncommonly amusing. He gives a fine parody of hoarse Richard's bawling, on Bosworth field, and then, a farcically executed ridicule of "*Scots wha ha'e*," &c. Both the lovers are killed dead, and brought to life again, in consequence of the "briny tears," shed by the fair cause of their bickerings. The acting of Harley and Knight would save any piece—and this piece was assuredly saved, in consequence of their efforts, although there were loud calls for its damnation from various parts

of the house; LISTON, however, is the only one on the stage, who can keep such things alive—and as LISTON is not in it, it stands a poor chance; even did not the inferiority of the material, bespeak early decay. The decidedly best performance in the burlesque, was Mrs. ORGER's *Squallerina*. Had she been the authoress of "*The Rejected Addresses*," she could not have evinced a finer notion of burlesque, and the bathos, than she displayed in the earlier scenes; the poverty of the plot and the paucity of decided novelty, caused the representation to move on very heavily, and the disapprobation, which was expressed, was not, we think, at all unjust, or uncalled for. We have heard this piece attributed both to Mr. MONCRIEFF, and Mr. G. WALKER, the author of the tragedy of "*Wallace*;" if it really belongs to the latter, we are sorry for it, as it will considerably detract from the fame he has already obtained by his former efforts.

25.—Merry Wives of Windsor—Halt of Caravan—Rumfustian.

26.—Ibid—Cupid and Folly—Ibid.

27.—Ibid—Lodoiska.

28.—Ibid—Ibid.

March 1st.—Richard II.—Invisible Girl—Highland Reel, [Benefit of Miss C. FISHER.]

Miss FISHER's benefit was most fashionably attended:—the principal attraction seemed to be Mr. KEAN's *Richard II.* Perhaps this piece is amongst the worst of the dramatic writings of SHAKSPEARE. It is redundant with puns, quibbles, and all the affectation of false wit and pedantic genius. Yet, on the other hand, it possesses in many passages, the true spirit of an author, who has never been equalled, and can never be excelled. Several alterations have been made in the performance from the original, and decidedly for the better. The principal character has had so little done for it, by the author, that the most powerful acting would be scarcely able to make it a lasting favourite on the stage: he has indeed coloured the historical portrait of the king; he has made a philosopher of the fool, and a moralist of the debauchee. He repents, it is true—but it is a species of death-bed repentance, that avails little to the merit of the man. Mr. KEAN has done as much for

the irresolute vacillating unfortunate *Richard* as the author; he has rescued him from contempt; as in some instances we are almost tempted to approve. Mr. K. evinces more of scorn, and contempt, than it was in the nature of so pusillanimous a monarch to evince. But it may be said with some degree of propriety, that to the language which SHAKSPEARE has given him, it is the duty of an actor to give all the energy of which it is susceptible; to this we readily assent, for the character itself, without some of those energetic helps to push it forward, would be dreadfully insipid. In all that Mr. KEAN excels, he is here equal to himself; and exhibits in this piece a rapidity of transition, from one emotion to another, which comes closely in competition with what our fancies can conceive of GARRICK. His burst of indignation, when informed of the revolt against him, is perhaps the boldest specimen of violence without rant, that has been exhibited on the stage, except in one or two instances, and those not general, by Mr. YOUNG, the most powerful declaimer on the boards. The impatience with which he listens to the tale of his disasters, his eager enquiries for,—and blasting curse of *Bushy*, *Bagot*, and *Green*, and his terror and despair at learning their and his probable fate, were only equalled by the struggles betwixt his pride and his fear, the wish to hold, and the necessity of resigning his crown. The whole performance was of the most splendid description, and leaves at an immeasurable distance all rivalry. Immense applause was showered down on "this mighty master of the tragic art," during the progress of the play, and from the marks of favour with which the whole was received, it will, no doubt, be more frequently brought forward.

2.—Merry Wives of Windsor—Cataract.
3.—(Ash Wednesday,) no Performance.
4.—Merry Wives of Windsor—Lodoiska.
5.—No Performance.
6.—Merry Wives of Windsor—Cataract.

COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.

Journal of Performances, with Remarks.

Feb. 25.—John Bull—Harlequin and Poor Robin [Benefit of the Philanthropic Institution].

26.—Native Land—Poachers.

27.—Ibid—Pantomime.

28.—Ibid—Miller and his Men.

Mar. 1st—Romeo and Juliet—Pantomime.

In consequence of sudden indisposition, Mr. C. KEMBLE resigned the character of *Romeo* to Mr. COOPER. The house was not full until halfprice; which is not to be wondered at, considering how many times this play has been acted during the past and present seasons. Mr. COOPER's *Romeo* is a novelty at this house and deserves to be mentioned with approbation. In our first Vol. p. 211, we have noticed his enactment of this character, and we are not inclined to change the opinions there expressed from his performance of this evening. Mr. C. KEMBLE has hitherto been generally considered the only *Romeo* on the stage; but the illusion is, however, now dissipated; for if Mr. COOPER's acting was less impassioned, it was nevertheless in other respects equal, and in some passages, even superior. Its general tone was more natural and varied, and not subject to the imputation of being monotonous and lachrymose. If Mr. C. would on all occasions abandon himself more to natural impulse, he would soon be deservedly numbered among the brightest ornaments of the KEMBLE school. The *Juliet* of Miss F. H. KELLY is so well known and admired, that it is almost unnecessary to say that she performed that varied and enchanting character, with all her accustomed excellence.

2.—Maid Marian—Poachers.

3.—(Ash Wednesday) No performance.

4.—Native Land—Forest of Bondy.

5.—Grand Selection of ancient and modern music, under the direction of Mr. BOCHSA.

6.—Native Land—Irish Tutor.—Simpson and Co.